



**NORTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE
TO STUDY BARRIERS TO SERVING ON CITY BOARDS
AND COMMISSIONS**

MEMBERS

Javier Luengo-Garrido, Chair
Councilor Jamila Gore, Vice Chair
Gwen Nabad, Citizen
Councilor Garrick Perry
Cynthia Suopis, Citizen

April 15, 2023

Acknowledgments

This *Select Committee to Study Barriers to Serving on City Boards and Commissions* has gone through an arduous process of information gathering, data analysis, discussions and community conversations that started back in June 2022. Thanks to everyone who made this process possible, including:

- Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra and the members of the Northampton City Council, for creating this select committee showing their commitment to open and participatory government in our City.
- City Council President James Nash and City Council Vice President Karen Foster, for your support and attentiveness throughout this process.

We would like to thank our collaborators, the team at City Hall who helped us access the information needed to work on this report. In particular, our thanks to Beth Kaplowitt for your support at the beginning of our charge, and to Laura Krutzler for the work you did to keep us going.

We want to express our deep appreciation for those members of the community that took the time to participate in our community survey and public forum. The thoughtful reflections you provided were in addition to hours of dedicated service you already provide to the City, as applicants, members, and former-members of a variety of boards and commissions. The time that you put into the survey has provided key insights for this Select Committee, and helps chart a course for Northampton to be further enriched through the robust participation of diverse members of our community in decision-making bodies across municipal government. Your volunteer engagement and willingness to share of your own lived experience is highly appreciated and valued by all the members.

We would also like to thank the former members of this Select Committee who contributed to the work of this commission, Susan MacDonald-Bolanos and Janna White.

Executive Summary

As a newly-formed Select Committee, our main approach was to dive into the collective experience of hundreds of people who are now serving on different committees across the city, those who have served in the past and are no longer serving, and those who have looked to donate their time and knowledge to our City but have not been called to serve. Our intention was to collect testimonies so we could understand the experience of those who have been in contact with the City. To that end, we created a survey that was sent by email to all committee members, former members, and applicants for whom the City has email addresses.

We complemented this data collection with discussions analyzing the existing process for applicants to learn about committees and board openings, and the process for them to apply and get selected. During our own internal discussions as a group, we encouraged each Select Committee member to get in contact with community members and seek their lived experience through personal conversations. We were cognizant of anonymity and privacy during this process. We created materials that made clear how any testimony would be used, so community members could knowledgeably decide when and how to speak on record or not. Attention to these process elements was critical to achieving the level of community participation needed for this study, ensuring every voice that came to us would be heard and taken into account.

The following key recommendations emerged from the Select Committee's study:

Streamlining the Process:

1. The City website should include up-to-date materials that community members can review related to boards and commissions, such as an updated description of the workload and level of commitment expected on particular boards and commissions.
2. Create automatic emails acknowledging the submission of an application and a straight-forward timeline so that applicants don't feel lost and undervalued in the application process.
3. Decentralize and create multiple options for communicating with the community. These should include but not be limited to providing multilingual materials and tabling events for the wider community to learn about volunteer positions and what is happening with the City. Proactively facilitate access for those who don't have or have limited access to internet connection and other forms of information networks.
4. Adopt processes to ensure new members of boards and commissions are thoughtfully on-boarded, welcomed, and set up to succeed, and that the service of all members is valued.

Government Transparency:

5. Create a clear data collection process to inform the City and public about the advancements of creating access for diverse community members across the

city. This committee recommends that the City produce a demographic report of those serving on boards and commissions in the city of Northampton twice a year (January and July), placed on the agenda of the City Council and discussed.

6. The staff person in City Hall charged with processing applications and providing them to the Mayor should additionally have official communication established with the city council committee in charge of reviewing nominations. There should be a clearer process for considered review of all applicants.
7. The Mayor and/or person in charge of applications should work hand-in-hand with committee chairs and vice chairs, looking for feedback, recommendations and guidance when an opening is created. Chairs/vice-chairs should be involved from the early stages of the process to the point a candidate is confirmed by the City Council.

Inclusion

8. Perform a needs assessment to create a viable system where people will be able to pay for childcare and other needs, which at this point is one of the main factors preventing community members from engaging with the city process. This may involve payment of a per diem for committee service or another structure.
9. Advocate for hybrid meetings so those who are interested and able to attend city meetings can do so, and those with limited transportation can still be heard and participate fully. Access to reliable community internet should be a priority for the city when we talk about connectivity and hybrid city meetings. Access also includes Universal Design considerations and accommodations.
10. We invite City Hall and the City Council to reimagine what diversity of voices is, and realize that including voices of those who may see things differently than us has a great value for our democracy and community.

Commission's Charge

The charge of the *Select Committee to Study Barriers to Service on City Boards and Commissions* was to “to study barriers to service on city boards and committees and opportunities for the City to work with residents to overcome those barriers.”

This select committee was established with membership consisting of:

- 2 elected officials
- 3 resident volunteer members of city boards and commissions and,
- 2 residents who have never or not currently serving on a city board or commission

During our work as a committee, we have lost two members, both women.

The Select Committee met for 21 public meetings over the course of 10 months, and held one public hearing event. We held public comments at the beginning of each meeting, and invited people with relevant experience on the process as well as those with experience serving on a board and/or committee. At the beginning of the process we had several issues with accessing remote meetings, and we had to cancel several meetings as a result.

Recommendations

Streamlining the Process

“I learned of a vacancy on the Council on Aging and volunteered by email to the mayor's office. The mayor's assistant said that the mayor had received my application. As far as I know, no one ever acted on it, and the vacancy was not filled.” (Survey answer)

“I think in general the process is opaque, and individual boards are hidden behind different parts of the website. It was hard for me to even know where to start, and the city govt website definitely favors already being someone who knows where to go and has been involved in local govt before. I felt like a mouse being rewarded for finding the end of the maze, but even the entrance to that maze was hard to find.” (Survey answer)

Community members have repeatedly voiced how puzzling it can be to apply for boards and commissions in Northampton. Specifically, multiple people have given testimony about the lack of communication from City Hall about where they are in the application process, and if anything is needed to proceed with their application. Some community members shared frustration when they realized a position in which they were hoping to serve has been filled without their ever having been informed.

A. Website

The City website should include up-to-date materials that community members can review related to boards and commissions, such as an updated description of the workload and level of commitment expected on particular boards and commissions. Currently, some board and commission minutes are out of date, preventing a candidate from understanding current discussions and issues before the body. Clear expectations of the amount of work that members do, including work during and between meetings, is necessary for applicants to understand if they can fulfill the expectations of the board/committee for which they are applying. Thanks to the work of the Chair of the Humans Rights Commission Megan Paik, we are submitting here a sample handbook, attached under Appendix II, that could be used for chairs and vice chairs of board and committees to add information about their current committee expectations. This tool will allow the City to upload critical information to the landing pages of each respective board/commission.

B. Communications

After submitting their application to a Northampton board or commission, applicants are left with no sense of what will happen next. Those who are appointed are informed of their selection and proceed to get the details of their appointment, such as when they will start to serve or when their confirmation hearing will be held by the Northampton City Council. Applicants who have not been selected may not hear back at all, reportedly because their application is being kept “on file” for future service.

The vast majority of applicants expressed that they learned about the position either by knowing somebody with information about the vacancy, from an elected official, or from the City website. This is particularly concerning in the context of current length of service: 48% of the community members who participated with the survey stated they have been serving for more than 5 years, and 25% of those for more than 8 years. **The current process is one that benefits those who know the city structure and/or are familiar with elected officials or others engaged in city politics.**

The City should decentralize and create multiple options for communicating with the community. These should include but not be limited to providing multilingual materials and tabling events for the wider community to learn about volunteer positions and what is happening with the City. In many cases, access to a stable, unlimited internet connection and the ability to download and print materials goes hand in hand with having greater access to resources. The City should work proactively to facilitate access for those who don't have or have limited access to internet connection and other forms of information networks.

C. Tracking of an Application

32% of community members who participated in the survey disagreed with the statement, “I knew what to expect during the application process.”

Applicants testified that after they submitted their application, they didn't get anything back acknowledging receipt. Communication – or the lack of communication – between City Hall and applicants can either encourage or discourage an applicant from being part of the process. After reviewing reports on communication during the application process, we find that the process privileges those who have successfully experienced going through it, leaving those with no previous experience or who are not well connected with city officials feeling lost and undervalued.

The creation of automatic emails acknowledging the submission of the application and a straight-forward timeline is needed if the City is interested in tackling the issue of applicants feeling lost. After weeks of waiting to hear back from the City, applicants move on with their lives and engage in a different activity because of the lack of answer from City Hall.

D. Vacancy Information

The number of open seats for community members to serve on a board or commission has fluctuated since this Select Committee began meeting. As of this writing, there are around 20 open seats for which a community member appointment has not been made. Although this could be seen as a lack of applicants, our survey and community outreach have documented at least 46 community members who stated that they applied to serve on boards and commissions but were never appointed.

A process by which the City can go back to those applicants and offer an alternative board should be created when possible, with the exception of those boards that require professional qualifications. In those cases, applicants that fulfill the required qualifications should be contacted.

We have learned of instances when even though professional qualifications were met, the individual ended up not being appointed. This is particularly concerning: these are community members volunteering their own professions to serve the city where they live.

E. Retention and Feeling Valued

It is recommended that new board/commission members feel welcomed and valued during their term of service to the city. Onboarding strategies that can assist in the retention and positive experience of new members are:

1. Welcome package from the Mayor and/or Chair of the Board.
2. Board chair makes contact with a new member to provide history, current initiatives and goals of the Board. Participation and expectations of the new member are outlined. Government and city requirements, rules and procedures are explained. This would include Open Meeting, Public Comment, quorum requirements, deliberation protocol and other traditional ways city meetings are conducted will be explained or documented in a welcome package.
3. Opportunities for further content education are made available to the members.
4. Assign a Board 'Buddy' to the new member.

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5. Education for all Board members on city Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) initiatives and how to provide a welcoming space to new members who represent marginalized backgrounds.
6. Annual check in with the new member from the member's City Councilor or Chair of the Board to assess new member's comfort and assimilation in their service.
7. Annual thank you event for all Board/commission members.
8. Publicize new member appointments.
9. Each Board discusses how to make the new member feel welcome at their first meeting.
10. Share a city organization chart with the names and contact information for all city departments. Include a listing of the Boards/Commission/Advisory/Councils groups and where they report in the city.

Government Transparency

"I think it would require a major culture shift in the way city politics are facilitated and run. At present, it feels like there is a requirement to be deferential and mostly in agreement with city officials to be able to serve. While I think adversarial relationships with city leadership can be equally unhelpful in sitting in positions of service in the city, I believe a culture that promotes diversity of opinion and collaboration would be needed to actually change the application process." (Survey answer)

Because of our charge, the way this Select Committee talked about access to government was centered on those who are *not* represented right now in our city. We appreciate and celebrate those who are serving now, but we strongly felt the need to center our recommendations on those who, for one reason or another, are not able to participate in our vibrant boards and committees.

A. Access to Government

Access has been a topic of conversation and debate among the members of this Select Committee. The vast majority of those who participated in our survey are people with the means and disposable time that allows them to serve for years on city committees and boards. Because of this, we have opted to amplify and center in this section those who have not been able to serve for different reasons.

55% of those who participated in our survey declare that they are 55 years old or more, with 31% declaring to be over 65 years old. 82% declare themselves to be racially White. On the other hand, we found no participant declaring themselves a native speaker of Spanish or another language. These data points show a lack of racial diversity. Northampton has overwhelmingly White community members serving across the city. Only 3% of respondents declared themselves as non-binary/genderqueer and only 0.6 transgender. The survey showed 0% Native Americans and 4% African American respondents. (For more detailed information, please refer to Appendix III.)

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A clear data collection process to inform the City and public about the advancements of creating access for diverse community members across the city should be a priority for the achievement and measurability of this goal.

Therefore, this committee recommends that the City produce a demographic report of those serving on boards and commissions in the city of Northampton twice a year (January and July), using the questions in the demographic section of our survey (adding the Latino/Hispanic missing data point) as a baseline. The report should include the number of applicants during the 6 (six) month period being reported, showing the numbers of those who were appointed and those who weren't, contrasting it with the number of open seats. The City may add any other data point that it deems necessary. This report should be made public using official channels of communication and social media used by City Hall and City Council.

This report should be placed on the City Council's agenda for discussion, and should be accompanied by a presentation in front of the full City Council and the Mayor by the person in charge of processing the applications at the time the report is due.

B. Relationship between City Council and the Mayor

In the City of Northampton, the Mayor typically presents candidates for approval before the City Council. In cases of agreed mixed membership on boards and committees, the Mayor and City Council each have a quota of members, so that both bodies can select their candidates and nominate the community members who will serve.

A vote taken by the City Council for the approval of a nomination is customary and required by the charter. We have found that there is no existing process for the City Council and the existing city council committee in charge of nominations on how to proceed when a nominee's name comes before them (besides voting positively or negatively on the nomination). The lack of a protocol establishing standards and responsibilities has led to uneven engagement from city councilors on how they approach a candidate's nomination.

The requirement of a vote for approval or rejection of a candidate within the articles of the city charter should not be taken lightly, and should carry the weight and importance that it deserves. It is the responsibility of the City Council to do its own research and engage in thoughtful conversation and debate when any matter before it requires a vote. The concept of checks and balances in the city of Northampton is a matter not only of transparency but also of legal and fiscal responsibility.

We believe that the City Council, as the legislative branch, should create processes and standards that are public and readily-available to the community. It is not healthy for our local democracy and transparency that the pattern seen by this select committee during the nomination process was of "*rubber stamping*" candidates before the council. Currently the City Council Committee on City Services has as a policy of assigning one member to talk to a

candidate. We strongly recommend the creation of a rubric that will standardize the questions asked to each candidate, as well as the evaluation process. This rubric should be included with the agenda of the committee for discussion, so that all members of the committee can meaningfully engage and participate when a candidate's interview is reported back.

We were informed that the specific person working at City Hall receiving application forms is the one who moves those applications along to the Mayor. We recommend that this person also have closer and official communication established with the respective city council committee in charge of receiving those nominations and voting to send the nominee to the full council with a positive or negative recommendation, or no recommendation.

C. Involvement of Committee/Board Chairs and Vice Chairs

During the deliberations and research done by this Select Committee, we found a lack of communication between the Mayor (and/or the person at City Hall in charge of nominations) and the chairs and vice chairs of those boards and committees where the new member will serve.

This is particularly concerning to us, given that a large percentage of the board/committee chairs and vice chairs expressed total ignorance of when a new member would be nominated, confirmed and sent to participate as a member of their board/committee. 16% of the community members who participated in our survey stated that one of the barriers was the lack of onboarding and mentorship, while almost 9% stated having problems and lacking the expertise on the area of work of the board – this was not only for technically-oriented boards but also community-oriented boards (for more information see Appendix III, Q3).

30% of community members who participated on the survey disagreed with the statement, “I knew what the city was looking for in new members of the board.” This shows that the need for early involvement of those who are serving and are in charge of running city boards/committees is vital for the improvement of the process.

Creating clear guidelines for chairs and vice chairs will be important if the City wants to create lasting change moving towards a more diverse and inclusive process. The feedback and insights that chairs and vice chairs may have and the support of the City will be key to address the lack of diversity, as well as the general perspectives of applicants going through the appointment process. Because of this, it is our recommendation that the Mayor and/or person in charge of applications should work hand-in-hand with committee chairs and vice chairs, looking for feedback, recommendations and guidance when an opening is created. Chairs/vice-chairs should be involved from the early stages of the process to the point a candidate is confirmed by the City Council.

Inclusion

A. Barriers

Because of the demographic profile of participants in our survey, we have a pool of answers from people who are likely to have time to serve as a volunteer for the City.

For this group of respondents, the lack of guidance and membership is at the top of the list for barriers to serving in the city. Perhaps expectedly, because the vast majority of those participating in this survey have served or are serving, the second barrier stated by this group is the tendency to feel ineffective and that the City doesn't act upon the recommendations made by their committees/boards. This is an interesting data point. We attribute it to the lack of expectation management done by the City when recruiting, as well as not enough emphasis informing those who are serving on what "advisory" means in the context of city government. It seems the City's definition of advisory may not be the same understanding for community members serving on city boards/committees. If the City wants to address this specific situation, it could add material clarifying what the City means by "advisory" to the materials that community members review when deciding if they want to serve or not. A common definition of "advisory" would help to create shared expectations between the parties.

The limitations and the nature of our survey made our Select Committee encourage its members to reach out personally to those community members that have never applied for a volunteer position on a board/committee. This is specifically the demographic that our recommendations are centering because it is those members who are underrepresented or absent from this conversation.

The lack of childcare, transportation and support are closely related to community members' ability to be part of our city's boards and committees. The use of remote meetings has helped with some of those issues, but the City should work with those communities to find a way they can actually have their lived experiences and voices heard and represented in our city's life.

We consulted with the City Solicitor about the possibility of the City offering a per diem to those serving on city boards/committee. The answer was that it would be complicated because they would be considered city employees and that also may affect their tax return and ability to access social services. We recommend the City do a needs assessment to create a viable system where people will be able to pay for childcare and other needs, which at this point is one of the main factors preventing community members from engaging with the city process.

Mobility across the city for some community members to attend city meetings is another cause of concern. The reliance on public transportation, limited in our city, is one concern voiced by community members when asked about their lack of participation. Remote meetings have helped with this barrier, but as we know this so far depends on the legislature and the governor's exceptions to Open Meeting Law. The City should advocate for hybrid meetings so those who are interested and able to attend city meetings can do so, and those with limited transportation can still be heard and participate fully. Access to reliable community internet

should be a priority for the city when we talk about connectivity and hybrid city meetings. This also is relevant for people with mobility issues and other physical disabilities.

Intentional design for access also requires adoption of Universal Design practices, as well as a process for specific accommodations that is planned from the beginning, rather than retro-fitted and added only as needed. Accommodations may include Braille, assistive hearing devices available at meetings, larger font emails, as well as ways for people to view information in a variety of ways: rather than only written, or only video, it could be both. It may also include access in different languages such as Spanish, Mandarin, or another high-incidence language.

Diversity of voices and opinions are important in city discourse. A common denominator for those who have applied but haven't been called to volunteer is that they may have run at odds with city officials or have a different opinion about specific policies enacted by the city of Northampton and/or their elected officials. We invite City Hall and the City Council to reimagine what diversity of voices can look like, and realize that including voices of those who may see things differently than us has a great value for our democracy and community. Every voice adds to the conversation and we expect the City to transform the process so we can have a diverse array of voices working together to make this city a better place for everyone to live.

Appendix I. Summary of Recommendations

The key recommendations of the Select Committee are reiterated below, with a page number reference to locate the complete discussion in the text.

Streamlining the Process:

1. The City website should include up-to-date materials that community members can review related to boards and commissions, such as an updated description of the workload and level of commitment expected on particular boards and commissions. (p. 5)
2. Create automatic emails acknowledging the submission of an application and a straight-forward timeline so that applicants don't feel lost and undervalued in the application process. (p. 6)
3. Decentralize and create multiple options for communicating with the community. These should include but not be limited to providing multilingual materials and tabling events for the wider community to learn about volunteer positions and what is happening with the City. Proactively facilitate access for those who don't have or have limited access to internet connection and other forms of information networks. (p. 6)
4. Adopt processes to ensure new members of boards and commissions are thoughtfully on-boarded, welcomed, and set up to succeed, and that the service of all members is valued. (pp. 6-7)

Government Transparency:

5. Create a clear data collection process to inform the City and public about the advancements of creating access for diverse community members across the city. This committee recommends that the City produce a demographic report of those serving on boards and commissions in the city of Northampton twice a year (January and July), placed on the agenda of the City Council and discussed. (p. 8)
6. The staff person in City Hall charged with processing applications and providing them to the Mayor should additionally have official communication established with the city council committee in charge of reviewing nominations. There should be a clearer process for considered review of all applicants. (pp. 8-9)
7. The Mayor and/or person in charge of applications should work hand-in-hand with committee chairs and vice chairs, looking for feedback, recommendations and guidance when an opening is created. Chairs/vice-chairs should be involved from the early stages of the process to the point a candidate is confirmed by the City Council. (p. 9)

Inclusion

8. Perform a needs assessment to create a viable system where people will be able to pay for childcare and other needs, which at this point is one of the main factors preventing community members from engaging with the city process. This may

involve payment of a per diem for committee service or another structure. (pp. 10)

9. Advocate for hybrid meetings so those who are interested and able to attend city meetings can do so, and those with limited transportation can still be heard and participate fully. Access to reliable community internet should be a priority for the city when we talk about connectivity and hybrid city meetings. Access also includes Universal Design considerations and accommodations. (pp. 10-11)
10. We invite City Hall and the City Council to reimagine what diversity of voices is, and realize that including voices of those who may see things differently than us has a great value for our democracy and community. (p.11)

Appendix II. Handbook

HANDBOOK FOR VOLUNTEER BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS Northampton's Municipal Government Structure

[Blue text indicates where a link should be added to the proper bodies for easy access.]

Strong Mayor Form

The strong mayor form of government has an elected **mayor, clerk and nine city councilors**: one councilor nominated and elected by each of the seven wards and two at-large to be nominated and elected by the voters at large. The mayor serves four-year terms, and the councilors are elected every two years.

In the strong mayor form of government, provided for in Article 3 of the Northampton Municipal Code, the **MAYOR** is given the power, without the necessity of the advice and consent of the city council, to appoint and remove their administrative assistants, budget and finance director, heads of all departments, all other officers of the municipality, and members of multi-member commissions, committees, boards and agencies excluding

The **CITY COUNCIL** is the legislative body of the municipality. The Mayor refers to the Council the names of those to be appointed as department heads and members of volunteer boards, committees, and commissions. The Council then refers the submitted names to a standing committee of the Council; that committee reviews each candidate for appointment and makes a recommendation to the full city council. The full council finally votes to approve the candidates as new members of municipal boards, committees, and commissions.

Boards and Commissions

[23 volunteer boards, committees, councils, and commissions](#) work with city government to maintain and improve the quality of life in Northampton.

The term of service on most boards is three years with possible reappointment to additional terms. Boards typically meet once a month, and some have subcommittees that meet in between monthly meetings.

The [City Council](#), [School Committee](#), [Forbes Library Trustees](#), [Smith Vocational and Agricultural Board of Trustees](#), and two members of the [Community Preservation Committee](#) are elected by the voters of Northampton.

Conflict of Interest Training

As a member of a public body, you are required to comply with the State's conflict of interest law. You will be provided with a copy of the summary of the law. The law requires that you acknowledge the receipt of the summary and that you complete the [Conflict of Interest Law Online Training](#) program every two years. Once you complete the training, print the confirmation page and return to the City Clerk's office at 210 Main Street, Room 4, Northampton.

Alternatively, scan and email a copy of the confirmation page to cclerk@northamptonma.gov.

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Swearing In

Contact Pam Powers, City Clerk at (413) 587-1223 to [schedule](#) your oath to be conducted in person or on Zoom.

Roles of Commissioners

The **CHAIR** performs the following duties:

- Presides at all meetings of the committee
- Observes [Robert's Rules of Order](#)
- Appoints subcommittees and chairs of subcommittees subject to approval of committee
- Signs correspondence on behalf of the committee
- Represents the committee before the City Council with the approval of the committee
- Performs other duties necessary or customary to the office

In the event the chair is absent or unable to act, the **VICE CHAIR** presides in place of the chair. In the absence of both the chair and the vice chair, the remaining **MEMBERS** shall elect one of their members to act as temporary chair.

MEMBERS may share the following duties:

- Host and record the virtual meeting sessions
- Draft and submit the monthly agendas, posted on the [city calendar](#), to the mayor's assistant or city clerk at least 48 hours (business days) prior to the start of full meetings
- Take minutes for the monthly meetings and distribute to members
- Update the social media accounts of the commission
- Respond to emails to the commission

Unless authorized by the committee, an individual committee member may not represent the committee before any other committee, outside agency, the media, or the general public. When an individual committee member is appearing in a private capacity before other committees, outside agencies, or the general public, the committee member must clearly indicate that they are speaking as a private individual, not as an official representative.

[What follows is an example of the commission-specific content that should be included after the City overview.]

Northampton Human Rights Commission

The [Human Rights Commission](#) is an advisory multiple-member body of the city. Our values, priorities, and activities are grounded in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

Established

There shall be a human rights commission consisting of nine members. Membership shall, as far as it is practicable, be selected so as to ensure representation from those classes protected under state and federal law, including but not limited to, race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, age, disability, veteran status, ancestry, sexual orientation or public benefit status.

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Authorities and Responsibilities

The Human Rights Commission shall act to promote human rights in the city of Northampton. The commission shall advocate and be an information resource for the rights guaranteed pursuant to local, state, and/or federal law on the basis of race or color, gender, physical or mental ability, religion, socio-economic status, ethnic or national origin, sexual identification or orientation, or age for all persons within the city of Northampton. The mayor and city council may refer issues pertaining to human rights to the commission for review and recommendation. The commission may organize programs and events to educate about human rights.

The Human Rights Commission does not investigate, mediate, or adjudicate complaints of discrimination or abuse but refers such complaints to the [Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination](#).

Human Rights Commissioners

Bios

Meeting schedule The day and time of monthly meetings are determined by consensus of the commission before the start of the calendar year. In 2022, full meetings of the HRC have been 90 minutes in length and scheduled on the third Wednesdays of the month.

Meeting format On Zoom from March 2020 to March 2023. At the termination of the latest [Governor's order](#) extending certain provisions of Open Meeting Law, monthly meetings may resume in the City Hall chambers.

Quorum A quorum is the minimum number of members whose presence is required before a meeting can legally take action. On a commission or board, a quorum is the numerical majority of the current members.

Sample Agenda

Archived Minutes

Zoom

Email Facebook page

HRC@northamptonma.gov

northamptonhrc@gmail.com <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100083337760840>

Current Topics of Focus

Lowering barriers to public service Onboarding of new commissioners Equity and sustainability statement CDBG public services

Potential Topics of Focus

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Reproductive justice
Land acknowledgments
Reparations in Northampton
Bias trainings for community

Some Previous Topics of Focus

Civility Pledge
Sanctuary City designation
Anti-Asian and xenophobic discrimination Periodic Ordinance Review 2020
Policing Review Commission
Vote16
Main Street for Everyone
Redesigning Power Structures
Affordable/attainable/equitable access to housing
Dept of Community Care/alternatives to policing

Recent Activities

Listening circles Nov 2018 and community surveys May 2019
Co-hosting local events (panel discussion Feb 2022, Apr 2021 and Oct 2022; readings July 2021 and July 2022)

Op-eds in the Gazette (Nov 2019, Dec 2019, Sep 2020, Dec 2021)
State and local legislative advocacy (2021 to present) Endorsement and co-sponsorship of resident initiatives

Letters of support for other commissions and boards Representation of the HRC on municipal committees

Future Activities

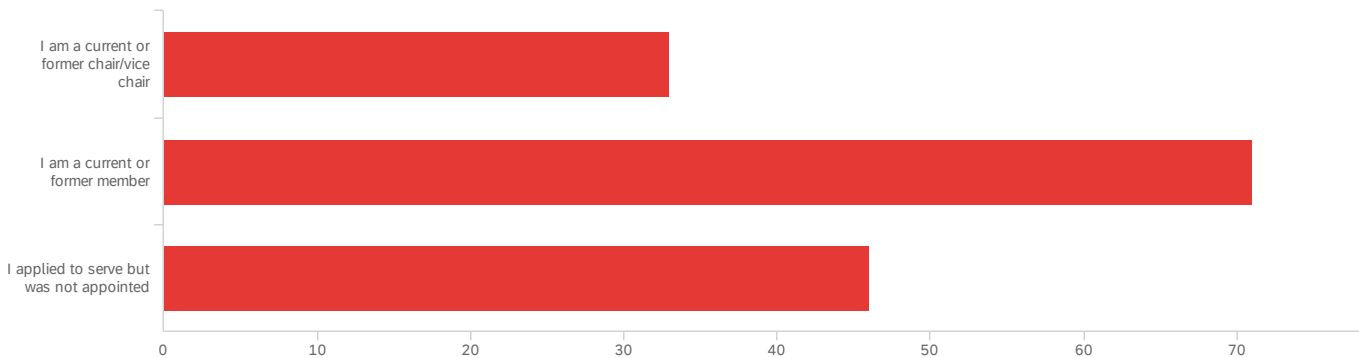
75th Anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Dec 10, 2023)

Appendix III. Committee Survey

Default Report

Testimony for Select Committee to Study Barriers to Serving on City Boards and Commissions
April 9, 2023 7:04 PM EDT

Q1-Intro - What is your involvement with City of Northampton board/commissions?



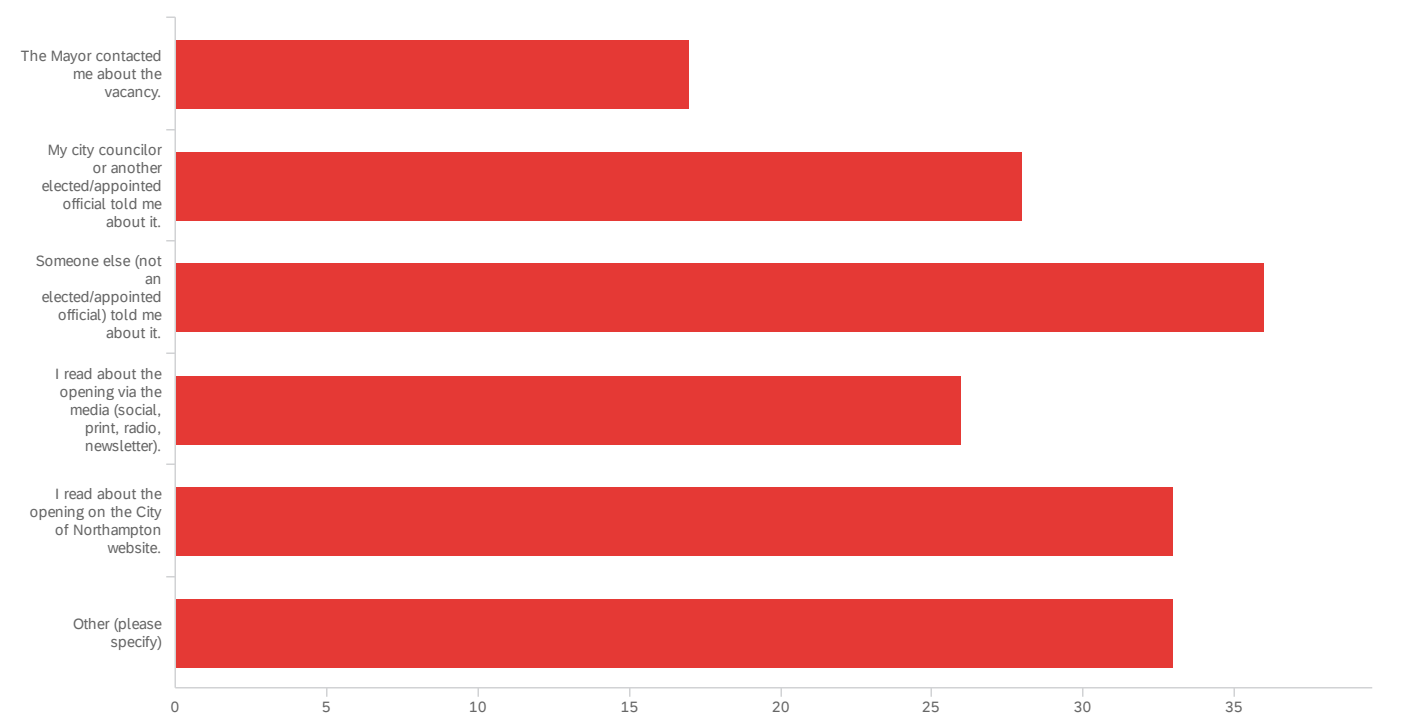
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
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1	What is your involvement with City of Northampton board/commissions?	8.00	10.00	9.09	0.72	0.52	150
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#	Field	Choice	Count
8	I am a current or former chair/vice chair	22.00%	33
9	I am a current or former member	47.33%	71
10	I applied to serve but was not appointed	30.67%	46
			150

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

Q1-Applying - How did you find out about the vacancy on the board on which you served or applied to serve? Check all that apply.



#	Field	Choice Count
1	The Mayor contacted me about the vacancy.	9.83% 17
3	Someone else (not an elected/appointed official) told me about it.	20.81% 36
6	Other (please specify)	19.08% 33
2	My city councilor or another elected/appointed official told me about it.	16.18% 28
4	I read about the opening via the media (social, print, radio, newsletter).	15.03% 26
5	I read about the opening on the City of Northampton website.	19.08% 33
		173

Showing rows 1 - 7 of 7

Q1-Applying_6_TEXT - Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)
I volunteered at the Mayor's office (Higgins)
Knew a member of commission

Other (please specify)

I looked for the Commission when I moved to Northampton

A fellow resident told me about the Resident Board Member vacancy; years later, the Mayor GL suggested the Arts Council

My wife had to step down and I was asked by the director

I read about the difficulties on Facebook and volunteered

I asked!

Current board member who is a friend told me

I was so long ago, I don't remember.

I actively searched for an opening

I was seeking out a board to join

My involvement in saving St. John Cantius Church

I was interested in the work so I started attending ALL the meetings. attending meetings. After year or so I received support/encouragement to apply.

I wanted to give back to my community and applied to volunteer.

I was a member of the same commission in a different town, researched to find it when I moved to Northampton and applied

Heard about it from a Ward newsletter

I expressed interest to Sarah Lavalley in serving on the Conservation Commission, and filled out the application. When I applied there was not an opening but I was contacted ~6 months later by the Mayor's office when a spot opened up.

I don't remember

I attended meetings and was encouraged to join.

I learned of the vacancy when attending a meeting.

I was mailed information from the Northampton Housing Authority

Sibling was in the board and knew about it

I applied to a variety of boards on the website

I research what boards or commissions had vacancies within my area of interest and then applied; or, the Mayor contacted me and I either accepted or declined; or a member of that committee, board or commission contacted me and I either accepted or declined.

I sought the appointment based on my professional experience and interests.

Other (please specify)

I don't remember!

On retirement, I approached the Mayor and introduced myself and asked where there were openings.

Initially a non-voting advisor

I was on the committee that created the CBD Architecture board and appointed to it by the Chamber of Commerce.

A tenant called me asking for help to submit his online application and said the former Mayor was seeking resident board members

I reached out to the City

Q2-Applying - What motivated you to apply?

What motivated you to apply?

Desire to be involved in matters that affect quality of life for residents of Northampton

Desire to do public service

interest in public service following Trump election

1) Wanting to add gender balance to the all-male commission that a former mayor had appointed 2) I cared about the subject matter and felt I could lend expertise and energy

I had recently relocated to Northampton and was interested in volunteer community service.

appropriate background, willingness to serve

Want to help our city out.

My nonprofit work at the time gave me some experience with the topic of the committee

I wanted my voice to be heard and for the identities that I hold to be represented; I also wanted to serve people both who share my identities and others who might not but from whom I can learn.

commitment to serve town

Civic Duty

Personal expertise.

Was very interested in the purpose (HRC)

Care about community and the topic area

I have a relevant history of experience in law and mental health fields

I used the Senior Center and thought I could be useful on the board.

A desire to serve my community.

Previous history with Disability Commissions

I am retired and was looking for interesting things to do. Since I use a wheelchair, the Disability Commission seemed like a good choice.

Government service, professional interest

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belongings

What motivated you to apply?

Arts Council - I was motivated because I am a performance arts (20+ years) and I had heard about the controversy regarding submitted grant application and wanted to be a part of the solution.

My involvement with recreation and youth sports at the time

Love of the City, Love of the Arts, Experience in Arts Management

I was looking for a way to serve the community

Community service

Being asked. The substance of the work was important to me. It is the duty of residents to participate in government.

I had been interested in serving on this committee for many years, just waiting for an opening

The opportunity to give back to my community

A sense of duty to serve my community

Interest in the Arts and thirty five year residence in Northampton

I want to help make the city a better place for everyone

Interest in serving the city and desire to learn more how the city works

I was seeking an opportunity to serve after the 2016 election.

interest in local history and preservation

To be a part of positive change in our community

My career in Federal law enforcement as an Industrial Hygienist for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration would assist the Board of Health not represented by other disciplines.

On two councils in the remote past (both for several years and actively involved) : Arts: long time interest and volunteering AND on AGING, my professional background and skill set; plus I work with people with lifelong cognitive impairments and wanted to help support their needs

I wanted to use my experience from living all over the country and also in art, and signage to contribute to my community.

I had read that there were many openings and I thought I would apply to help serve the community.

I had retired from work in another community and was looking forward to contributing to the city in which I live

Commitment to public service; interested in preservation

Work experience, knowledge and familiarity with the Department

There were vacancies, I was interested in both public service and the topic area, I saw a need where I thought I could help and I thought my experience might be useful to the city.

What motivated you to apply?

Strong Desire to become an active member of my community

I was interested in getting involved in a board that worked on local housing issues, and specifically sought one out

My interest in the Board's topic. I had applied once before 10 years earlier and was not chosen.

I have expertise I wanted to share with my City, as a volunteer. I wanted to be involved and give back. I thought I would meet some interesting people

Interest in helping city improve

Be involved in city government

Want to help our city.

My interest in preserving a vibrant downtown

Wanted to contribute to Northampton

Trust in person who asked me to apply and thought my perspective based on professional experience would be useful

Interest to learn more about the city's inner workings

Interest in the work. I spoke to a secretary but no one ever got back to me either way, this was about 6 years ago.

Desire to work with others to govern and improve Northampton

I was interested in the work and volunteering in the city on projects so I started attending all the meetings and I read all the past minutes to learn about the work.

See above please

Public service

Serve the community

Have served on the Personnel Advisory Committee under Former Mayor David Musante that reviewed all city positions and grade levels.

wanted to give back to my community in a field that I am interested in

A current committee member mentioned the opening and suggested I join.

I am disabled and have a serious interest in helping others in my position

Problems with being accommodated at certain sites including Walter Salvo building and the Lumberyard... both apt buildings in Noho.

I wanted to serve in a municipal volunteer position to better the health and wellbeing of our community.

What motivated you to apply?

I am a teacher and had children in NPS. I wanted to serve the community.

Wanted to help advance girls in sports and recreational activities

Community Service needs

interest in the topic the board would be discussing

I finished volunteering for a nationwide organization, and now had more time to give which motivated me to search for an opportunity to serve locally.

I love our city and wanted to help

I worked in land conservation for 5 years earlier in my career, and have been actively involved in agriculture in Northampton since moving here in 2011. I'm really interested in how we manage the City's natural resources and wanted a new volunteer opportunity after stepping down from the Grow Food Northampton board after 6 years of service.

I think I was interested in the issues the board addressed and learned there were openings.

Very interested in the future growth & development of the city and my neighborhood had recently experienced a major residential housing development a major

I have applied to be on four separate boards/commissions, each one with a slightly different motivation as they all have different work. In general, I was motivated to apply due to the lack of younger and marginalized voices in city politics, and wanted to bring innovative ideas to various ways to run the city. When I applied to the board of health, there was an interest to bring my lived experience and my experience as clinical social worker to mental health aspects of public health. When I applied to the policing review commission, I wanted to bring my experience as a community organizer and social worker to thinking of ways to provide services to our town outside of policing. When I applied to the disability commission, I was interested in bringing together my knowledge of policy and my passion for disability justice to make meaningful change in our city, because sometimes bridging ideology and policy can be hard. And when I applied to be on the Select Committee to study barriers to service, I was motivated because I want to make the city better for anyone who wants to serve. 3 out of 4 of my applications to serve in city politics came after losing a city council race, and after me personally reaching out to the mayor on multiple occasions to offer my skills and services to the city. Since 2020, I have been proactively looking for ways to sit in any position to serve our town and haven't been able to get a single formal position anywhere within the city.

Desire to help my community

Service to my community

I was interested in the Policing Review Commission due to my lengthy experience with police and mental health in Northampton.

interest in giving back to the city

I wanted to contribute to the solutions regarding housing issues and also understand them better

I had been before the Historic Commission several times.

Concern about high housing costs in Northampton.

I felt the board was too much influenced by staff, and not acting independently.

What motivated you to apply?

As a resident of the city since 2006 and a Section 8 voucher recipient, I have had many interactions with the housing authority some very helpful and others obstructive. Any chance to assist with improvements or advocacy in city housing is of great interest to me as a private citizen and as the founder of a local Nonprofit.

To serve the residents of Northampton, especially those who are often marginalized.

The mayor's invitation on one of the committees and encouragement from many including councillors for the other.

the health of the children of Northampton. Recreational and sport experiences here are not good.

Give back to the community

A desire to serve the community in an area in which I could make a contribution

Government involvement, college applications

I wanted to use this opportunity to make a positive change in my community.

I have been a Chef for over 20-years and have worked with many members of different Board of Healths in different states as well. I feel as though my knowledge and experience would have made me a valuable Board of Health member for the city of Northampton.

I was interested in contributing to the work of both the committee on which I formerly served and the one on which I currently serve.

service to my community

At the time, I ran Modern Myths, the comic book store downtown (we closed in 2018). I'm passionate about lowbrow arts, and local artists were often overlooked for city work and featuring, sending money to affluent white men from out of state.

Had been wanting a new appointment for a couple years, but nothing had been forthcoming.

Interest in the subject matter/committee goals and to gain experience in government service

I had the bandwidth and ability to commit, the mission of the board mattered deeply to me, I thought I had something to bring that would be welcome on the board in that moment.

I felt it would be a good way to understand how boards in our town work and to serve the community.

Interest in getting involved with changing and improving the city, interest in bettering housing for those of lower income

Curious about efficacy of boards and desire to make change

I had been a member before and wanted to be a part of the board again.

I was very involved in Northampton High School and the idea of being involved in city change felt exciting, especially as a young person

Civic responsibility and a desire to have community involvement in local government processes

When I heard how many vacancies there are, I felt concerned! I figured that I should get more involved, and then once I understood what it means to serve on a commission, then perhaps I can help others to get involved.

What motivated you to apply?

Either an area of interest I had or if not particularly so I had the skills, knowledge, experience or education that would be of assistance so accepted despite reservations for those matters that were of a short and defined duration.

I want to make the city more accessible for people like me

I thought it would be a great fit for my strengths and experience, and there was a real need for leadership in that area at the time.

a desire to be involved at a deeper level and to share any expertise.

I have served on committees/boards on multiple state and profession related committees and boards. I retired about seven years ago and served on board of ServiceNet and presenter for the Mass Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) of Elder Services. My involvement in these groups will be ending during the next year and I had hoped to contribute my time, effort and experience to Northampton, my home for over ten years.

I think contributing my time to my community is important

Interest in police reform as it relates to social and racial Justice.

My desire to be involved in making public transportation more accessible here in Northampton and more environmentally sustainable.

Interest in the work of the commission

The encouragement of Marianne, and understanding and stressing the importance of contributing to the city.

To serve. I am very interested in historic architecture.

I have a strong sense of community and felt compelled to help

Over forty years experience in the field even though a newcomer to Northampton at the time.

A strong interest in Northampton's history.

The former Mayor had recommended me for the position. I had the time available and thought it I could be an interesting and helpful way to participate in City government.

My wish to participate in the council.

I was always interested in the board I'm on

interest in city activities

I was new to Northampton and looking for a way to be of service in my new community.

I had the time and the area of wetlands protection was of great interest to me.

A desire to serve/contribute to my community. I believe in public involvement, and have sought to be a part of community decision-making as a member of the CIC, the (old) Board of Public Works, the Tree Committee (as BPW representative) and now as elected member of the CPA.

I am prior chair and current vice-chair of the Housing Partnership. I am a legal attorney that represents low income tenants and thought my work experience dovetails with the mission of the Partnership

What motivated you to apply?

I have been grateful to Northampton since moving here from Boston in 1978. But although my wife had a practice here and our kids grew up here, I traveled a lot for work and never had time to be really involved.

interest in architecture and preserving unique qualities of Northampton's downtown

As a longtime northampton resident who is interested in art, I thought it would be rewarding to be on the arts council.

I did not apply. I was assigned to the position as part of my job.

I was recently retired, had experience in affordable housing, and wanted to be of service to my community.

I like working on a team on issues I care about.

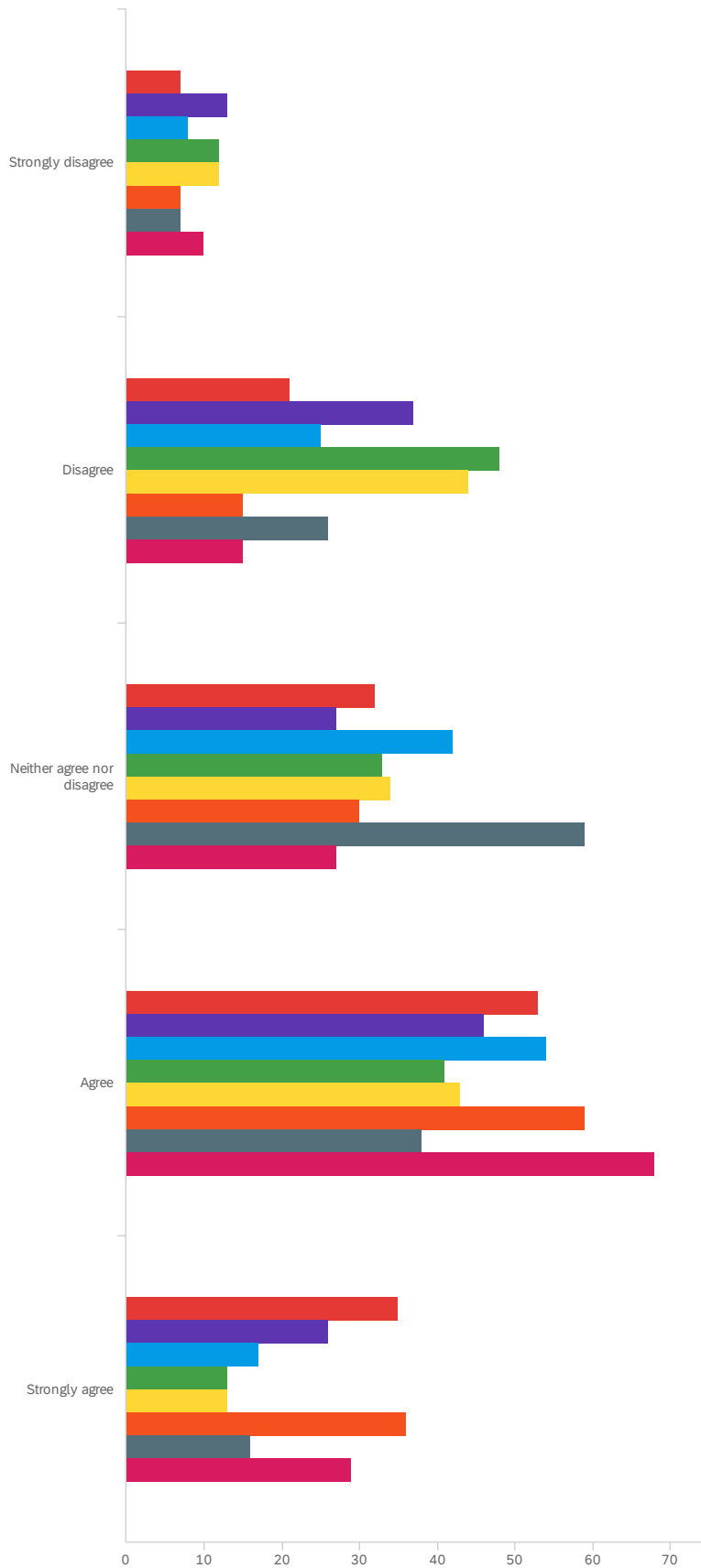
Interest in planning / housing issues.

I thought I could make a difference, the NHA Board treated residents as if they should simply be grateful they have a place to live...

wanting to get to know the city better and serve the greater good

Public service is important to me. I was an enthusiastic member of both on the Charter Review Committee and the Ranked Choice Voting Committee.

Q3-Applying - Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the application process.



- My experience of applying to serve on a board was positive.
- The application process was transparent.
- The application process was efficient.
- I knew what to expect throughout the application process.
- I knew what the city was looking for in new members of the board.
- I felt respected throughout the application process.
- The application process made me excited to serve.
- I would consider applying for another board in the future.

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
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#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	My experience of applying to serve on a board was positive.	1.00	5.00	3.59	1.13	1.28	148
2	The application process was transparent.	1.00	5.00	3.23	1.24	1.55	149
3	The application process was efficient.	1.00	5.00	3.32	1.06	1.12	146
4	I knew what to expect throughout the application process.	1.00	5.00	2.97	1.13	1.28	147
5	I knew what the city was looking for in new members of the board.	1.00	5.00	3.01	1.13	1.28	146
6	I felt respected throughout the application process.	1.00	5.00	3.69	1.09	1.19	147
7	The application process made me excited to serve.	1.00	5.00	3.21	1.01	1.03	146
8	I would consider applying for another board in the future.	1.00	5.00	3.61	1.11	1.23	149

#	Field	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Total
1	My experience of applying to serve on a board was positive.	4.73%	7	14.19%	21	21.62%	32	35.81%	53	23.65%	35	148
2	The application process was transparent.	8.72%	13	24.83%	37	18.12%	27	30.87%	46	17.45%	26	149
3	The application process was efficient.	5.48%	8	17.12%	25	28.77%	42	36.99%	54	11.64%	17	146
4	I knew what to expect throughout the application process.	8.16%	12	32.65%	48	22.45%	33	27.89%	41	8.84%	13	147
5	I knew what the city was looking for in new members of the board.	8.22%	12	30.14%	44	23.29%	34	29.45%	43	8.90%	13	146
6	I felt respected throughout the application process.	4.76%	7	10.20%	15	20.41%	30	40.14%	59	24.49%	36	147
7	The application process made me excited to serve.	4.79%	7	17.81%	26	40.41%	59	26.03%	38	10.96%	16	146
8	I would consider applying for another board in the future.	6.71%	10	10.07%	15	18.12%	27	45.64%	68	19.46%	29	149

Showing rows 1 - 8 of 8

Q4-Applying - How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the application process for boards?

How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the application proces...

Better advertisement of openings

Consider how the process worked in the late 1990's. It seemed simple and efficient.

standardize the procedures from outreach to approval, establish expectations for each board and board role, etc., ensure equity in recruitment and review, centralize information and allow for transparency and easier access, communicate feedback for denials/delays/approvals in a timely manner, provide support through budget allocations and troubleshooting, demonstrate appreciation for volunteers

Perhaps post available positions & details about the application process on the City's website & in the Gazette.

more transparency, more seeking the best candidates/qualifications and diversity of thought (not just identification) rather than an echo chamber to validate a position

Boards/committees need to be more balanced with people from all sides on them. They look to be stacked in favor of the way they want the final outcome to be.

A mentor or someone who knows the process well could help prospective committee members feel more comfortable about what to expect during the process

I think that there can be more public-facing programming on what the committees and commissions do and we can be intentional about making those processes transparent for groups who have been historically excluded and currently marginalized institutionally.

Make more widely known

Significantly Speed up the process, Explain it up front. have current members mentor new members.

not posting people's information on the internet, permanently, i had to change my number and IT wouldn't take it down.

Maybe have a list of all open positions in a prime spot on city website

I don't have any basis to criticize the current process

As far as I know, the position for which I applied remained vacant more than a year later.

More advertising to attract some of the very intelligent people of Northampton. Many don't know how to apply

Improve speec

Explain the process. If someone does not make the cut to be on the board have the decency to notify them.

How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the application proces...

Have funding available for professional development. Arts Council, I would like to take a crash course in Google Outlook and Excel - it would help with the extensive grant application rating. As for NHA, I live in public housing and had to pay my own way for biennial NAHRO Convention - the ONLY Resident Board Member who had this honor - in that Board, it seems I'm the only Commissioner who is seeking a NAHRO certification, I sought and found trainings, workshops, and webinars from a variety of housing and government organizations: Mel King Institute, Mass Union for Public Housing Tenant, Attorney General, DHCD...wish other Commissioners would seek training other than the relaying on the ED telling Board members about the rules and laws. We are not appointed to simply rubber stamp and not question, investigate and probe. One great example, The Chair put on the Agenda a raise for the ED position and presented it to the board as making that position comparable to the other LHA's 'in the area'. The ED did not bother to seek, ask, or investigate whether the quality of life in the surrounding LHA's are the same or better. I surveyed 20-30 LHA's and they had a variety of services for residents like public safety, WiFi connect in the Common Areas, online rent payment options, outsource landscaping services, weekend maintenance on the properties, utilizing cards instead of in addition to coins (there was a 2-year shortage due to the pandemic. So now the ED's salary is on par with surrounding LHAs and yet the quality of life for residents is subpar. The Chair and ED reprimanded me for seeking this info as it was overstepping my role and acting like the ED.

Make it more public if possible

media campaign

I never received a response at all from my application. It would at least have been nice to know that the positions had been filled and they didn't need me on the board. It is unpleasant to apply for something that is voluntary and not even get a response

Communication on transparency

much more transparency and public notification of job description, time commitment, other cmte members

Make the process clearer to applicants

By defining the expectations more clearly

I would like to know about my application status. I've never heard back.

Working hard to be transparent and to demystify the process - for someone unfamiliar with serving, there are a lot of unwritten rules and exepectations that would be helpful to explicitly state

Help applicants better understand timeline and process and what the city is looking for; promote the position; promote opportunities to interact with current board members

I think it could go faster, but the timing was a bit funky due to the election for mayor

speed of processing applications

The process of appointment should be quicker. The City Council involvement for scheduling appointments was glacial. Weeks were consumed during this time.

expedite the approval at City Council

Including video submissions would help.

Provide a response to applications, perhaps with information about what the process is and when you might learn about whether you are selected.

I already had some familiarity with the Director of the department of the board to which I was applying, so I was able to get as much clarity as I wanted by asking questions. Providing this access to all applicants might be helpful. Perhaps having a video recording available online about the role and needs of boards with a vacancy could be helpful.

How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the application proces...

Make that vacancies are promoted more widely along with clarity about the role and the scope of the position that is being applied for.

I'm not sure what background board members need to have, but I wouldn't apply to a city board again since I have no idea what the city is looking for and am under the impression that I could likely never meet the qualification criteria (whatever it may be). I felt discouraged by the process of trying to serve, so I joined a nonprofit board instead.

I think in general the process is opaque, and individual boards are hidden behind different parts of the website. It was hard for me to even know where to start, and the city govt website definitely favors already being someone who knows where to go and has been involved in local govt before. I felt like a mouse being rewarded for finding the end of the maze, but even the entrance to that maze was hard to find.

They can definitely create a social awareness campaign to more widely advertise committee vacancies.

I think most people prefer online access, but for me going in to talk to the Mayor, City Clerk etc. was meaningful. I think personal human, connection is meaningful

More information, how the process actually works

Have long time citizens on committees

Better blend of applicants on boards

More public outreach

More outreach from the Mayor's office, recruiting.

It seems to work OK, based on my experience.

Information about the length of service for temporary committees/boards, what the process is after submitting the application is, and more information on what the city is looking for in terms of skills and qualifications

Hopefully my case was an oversight. Not sure since I don't know the process now.

Become more open to newcomers. Advertise around town for open board positions. Public meetings re: boards and procedure for applying.

Encourage residents to attend meetings on topics they care about. Encourage them to learn what the work going on is about by reading the past minutes.

Most of these statements do not apply to me as once I applied, I was never contacted. I believed it was due to the Pandemic and many businesses being short staffed.

The process lacks transparency and is rubber stamped by a City Council Committee

The application process needs to be taken away from the mayor's office who is not qualified to make these appointments nor is her staff that already has a lot on their plate. This should be under the City's Human Resources department who has the qualifications to screen these applications for the Council. Once candidates are chosen then they are referred to the Council for review, questions, interviews, appointment.

perhaps a requirement that an applicant attends a certain number of meetings before being considered for the position.

How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the application proces...

Councilors could let their residents know about current openings. This could help ensure more people without existing connections or intel consider. I never received any notification that my application was denied but it has been nearly six months since I applied. It would be useful for residents who wish to support their community in this way to get feedback and at least the respect of communicating where decision makers were in the process and the final decision with accompanying feedback.

There are still many people without computers or computer knowledge. Advertise the open boards and make it possible to easily apply without using a computer

There was some confusion regarding the app. process as I was applying to replace a former member, but I was able to get the info I needed to figure it out.

Yes, I do believe the City can work to make a more transparent, efficient, and thoughtful process. Importantly, I do believe the City could provide expectations of what they are looking for, make it more clear when it is possible to apply, and describe directly the profile of individuals the City is looking for to be on each board.

Perhaps a monthly posting in the paper of vacancies.

Publicize it much more; it seems it still is who knows who.

Have guides on what the process entails and realistic timelines that take place before you can serve.

The opening of a position is something one needs to seek out, and the city website is difficult to navigate. I was looking for information on the City's stance on outdoor lighting. I never found it.

I never received any communication from the City of Northampton.

being more responsive to applicants, I don't think I ever heard anything back

I think that maybe when the meetings convene they could announce openings. I think that people interested in what that board does are the most likely people to apply

Once a resident has been identified as having an interest for a board / committee position an incumbent board member should reach out and give that person some background info on the board's operations & procedures. They could also describe the expectations for new Board member.

In general it was a good process. And indicated above it would have been better had someone clarified what the process would be about.

I think it would require a major culture shift in the way city politics are facilitated and run. At present, it feels like there is a requirement to be deferential and mostly in agreement with city officials to be able to serve. While I think adversarial relationships with city leadership can be equally unhelpful in sitting in positions of service in the city, I believe a culture that promotes for diversity of opinion and collaboration would be needed to actually change the application process. Also increased transparency, rubrics, and requiring the mayor to publish all applicants and reasoning for her choices when presenting to city council would be helpful. I think the public and councilors deserve to know not only who ends up being chosen, but who isn't chosen as well. This would increase accountability all around. While I think there is some awkwardness in publicizing reasoning for not choosing someone, I am confident the city can find ways to be transparent and accountable without calling people's shortcomings out too much. (and also I hope for a culture that can acknowledge shortcomings in people serving the city as well).

More outreach/promotion by board members (like send us talking points or info we can share on social media about board openings)

Proactively seek out less obvious community leaders to serve (e.g., via Northampton and Florence Heights)

I don't think this was a typical board due to its highly politicized nature. The public meeting process with its strange rules was never discussed and pretty much blew me away. I also learned that those who understood the rules had more control and authority in any meeting. Perhaps there could be a manual explaining how public meetings are constructed. We had a brief orientation with counsel but I don't think it was sufficient.

How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the application proces...

perhaps to educate the residents on what the various boards do

If someone takes the time and expends the energy to apply for a position, someone should acknowledge it, maybe even respond. It seems to me bad form to say there is no vacancy, then when you appear before that board find out there are unfilled seats.

Share more about the particular boards - a member manual would be helpful. Hold outreach meetings to explain the opportunities and the process, especially to reach underrepresented groups.

I do not have any suggestions.

Applicants should be notified that the application was received, and given notice if accepted/declined.

Make the steps very clear -- timing, who vets, who decides, etc. I would need to review the application form again to comment about that.

Northampton is very political so the selection process is the key.

N/A

I served on boards where the board members came from various routes, from appointed to elected to pro forma, so it's hard to make a generalization. I do think that board members should have better training about the jurisdiction of their board and the parameters of how their board is a part of the overall management of the city.

Reaching working people where they are, having a designated HR person to contact for questions, phrasing questions in an inclusive way (resources online)

Decentralize the mayor in the decision making process.

More contact with applicants and status updates.

More outreach about opportunities would be helpful. I only learned about opportunities because I went looking. The application process for me was fine, but I have heard from other applicants that it has moved slowly for them. I knew what to expect both from info on the website and talking to people along the way.

follow up with people who have applied - I never heard back both of the times I applied, I submitted my application and never heard a thing.

At the time, 2017 I believe, it was paper only and required some sort of sponsorship? I honestly don't remember it much, other than it seemed like jumping through bureaucratic hoops.

Post listings of openings, list preferred qualifications/relevant experience, detail process of applying, etc. For years, I have wanted to be on this or that committee, yet despite openings, was never contacted. Maybe the city could keep an active list of interested parties, with preferred positions.

The online application form, while convenient, is an awkward and distanced way of putting yourself out there, without knowing who you are writing to and without getting any feedback afterward. It would be good to actually meet in person or on Zoom rather than just sending an email to the ether, or at least to have the option to do that for those who prefer it. Also, sometimes it seems like there are seats that are vacant for a long period of time. Maybe you could allow interim members to serve while you continue looking for an ideal candidate. Or you could see about placing an applicant on a different committee than the one they applied to — anything to encourage people to participate and to welcome the enthusiasm of someone willing to serve. I would think that barring extraordinarily difficult personalities, local governments can make use of and appreciate any volunteer participation its residents are offering. Even by giving someone a very basic task to do, you can help them learn their way around the city government and invest in people who can become helpful civic servants over time. In short, being more communicative and interested in applicants both during and after the application process would be my suggestion. Thank you for asking and thank you for all that you do!

find ways to bring the application process out of city hall and into neighborhoods by appearing at community events

How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the application proces...

The application process works well, but I think it would be great if more people knew when board positions became open

Greater transparency in the steps involved. More efficient process. Greater explanation of what expected work on the boards is. Onboarding process that is not tied to whoever is chair at the time.

Articulate the limitations and parameters of the board; restrain the influence of city solicitor and other outside entities.

Include in the application the process by which decisions are made and criteria that may be used in making decisions

The delay between submitting an application to being notified of selection can take several months. Applicants would understand that better if they knew a Councilor might interview them, the Council had to vote on nomination, the Committee Chair had to be notified, etc.

find more ways to recruit new members and communicate about openings.

For any board, commission, committee whether ad hoc or by term it should be clear what skills, knowledge, experience are expected, if any, what the process of consideration and appointment will consist of and a general reason as to why not selected (e.g., numerous applicants, applicants that had direct KSAs to apply, diversity consideration, etc.)

Actually get back to people about their applications, whether they are appointed or not. I've never heard back about mine

I got zero information after applying. I don't have advice since maybe they were overwhelmed with applicants? A start might be communication to applicants.

I applied numerous times, in a variety of ways. Only once - once - did anyone ever respond, reply, answer, etc. That was David Murphy. Otherwise, I never heard a single thing from anyone, ever.

It would be improved by informing the residents of Northampton of committee/board vacancies, receipt of applications, status of application etc

The city should advertise openings.

Outreach to applicants not selected, keeping them apprised of what's happening/when throughout the process (including what the Board/commission subsequently offers as public meetings

I never received any contact about my application or the process and would have liked to have heard something during the process.

List the qualifications or attributes a particular commission is seeking and explain in writing the process and time frame for selection

Publish open seats, application process and assign a City Councilor or Board member to "coach" interested persons who might need reads, more information or some problem solving regarding their personal barriers.

Actually talk to the people applying

I was not informed of the conflict of interest rules before being appointed.

I was not updated during the process and every contact was a surprise. I did not know the City Council approved my nomination until Pam Powers called me to take the Oath.

I wouldn't have known about the position unless I was contacted directly about it. There could be more publicity about open positions through social media and news outlets.

How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the application proces...

More communication

Perhaps just make the process more widely known

Provide more details and a flow chart of the process

Maybe a few public forums where each commission is represented by a member who shows a passionate and contagious interest in the work of their commission.

Outreach is a significant issue. Based on my 30+ years of personal and professional government experience at the local, state and federal levels, I believe that most citizens have a poor understanding of the function of government and the opportunities for participation that exist. I'm not sure how to crack that nut, but it seems to me to be one of the major challenges to greater public participation -- "I don't know how" and "I can't make a difference."

It has been awhile since I first applied. But my experience with new members on my current board is that they often join without much knowledge over what we do or have experience that is helpful to our work. We have a high turnover of members for this very reason. So more information on the front end of who might be good candidates to serve and what we actually do at meetings

The application process is pretty simple. The only suggestion I have is clearer communication of the expected timeline.

More consistent communication snout where things stand.

?

Not sure

I did not go through the application process, so I cannot speak to this question.

My application was processed quickly but I know of others who haven't ever heard back or only heard something after a long time. I think every application needs a timely response.

I dont remember the details of the process too well because it was more than 5 years ago

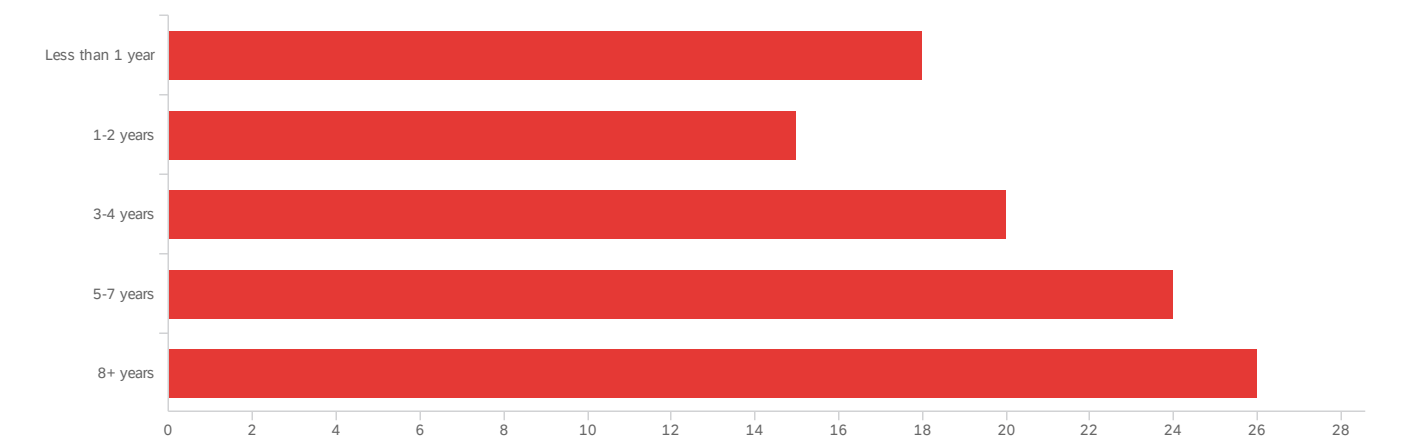
No thoughts. Seemed very straightforward

I'm a Resident Board Member if the Northampton Housing Authority who is consistently harassed by the ED, Chair, and Councilor. The City of Northampton needs to provide resources (legal) to help board members - we need support on all levels!

Actively reach out to the community as in weather alerts.

Expedite, if possible

Q1-Serving - How long total have you served on Northampton city boards? Choose your cumulative years of service.

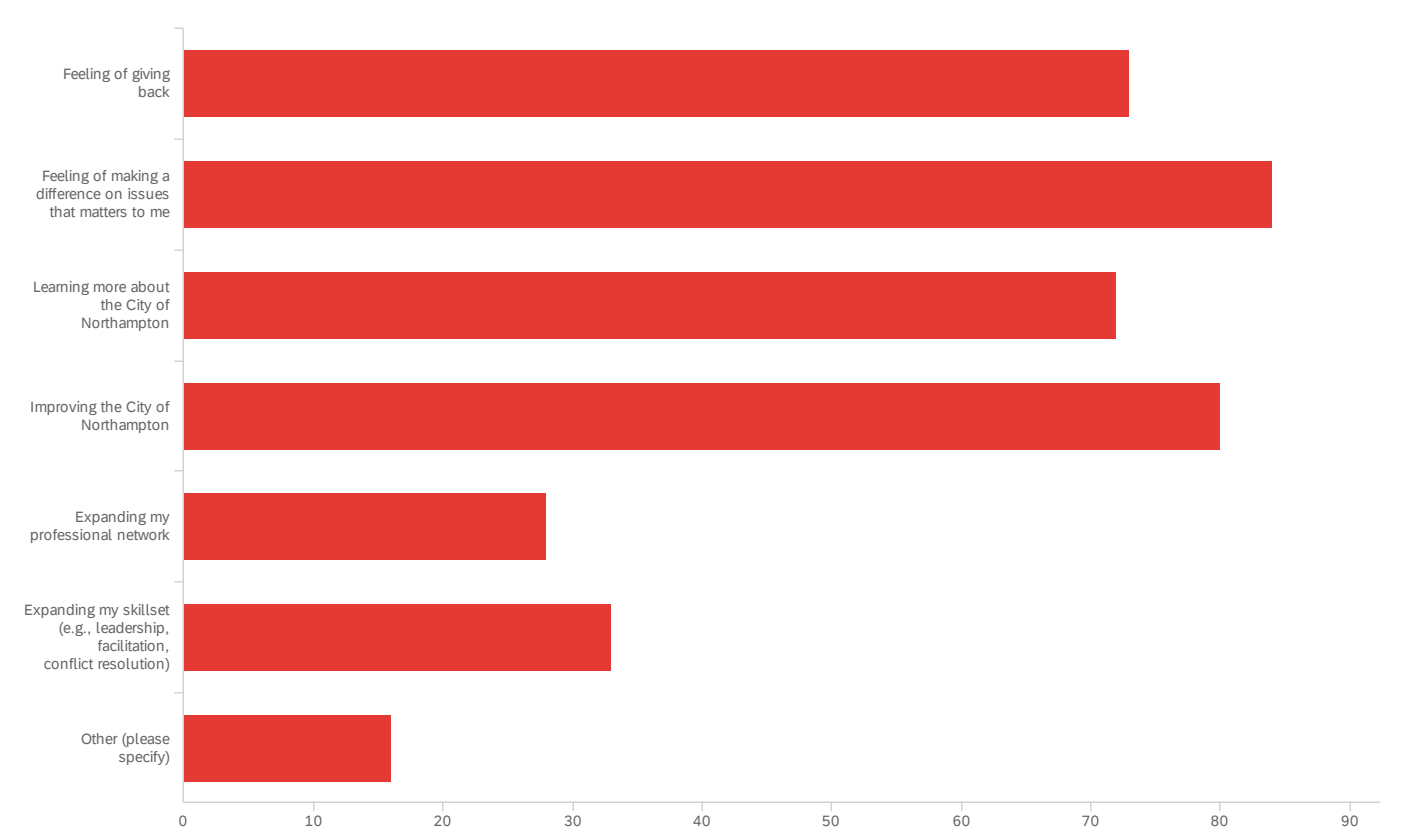


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How long total have you served on Northampton city boards? Choose your cumulative years of service.	1.00	5.00	3.24	1.42	2.03	103

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Less than 1 year	17.48% 18
2	1-2 years	14.56% 15
3	3-4 years	19.42% 20
4	5-7 years	23.30% 24
5	8+ years	25.24% 26
		103

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

Q2-Serving - What are the biggest personal, professional, and/or civic benefits of your service? Check all that apply.



#	Field	Choice Count
1	Feeling of giving back	18.91% 73
2	Feeling of making a difference on issues that matters to me	21.76% 84
3	Learning more about the City of Northampton	18.65% 72
4	Improving the City of Northampton	20.73% 80
5	Expanding my professional network	7.25% 28
6	Expanding my skillset (e.g., leadership, facilitation, conflict resolution)	8.55% 33
7	Other (please specify)	4.15% 16
		386

Showing rows 1 - 8 of 8

Q2-Serving_7_TEXT - Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)

I want to feel like I'm making a difference or giving back but I don't yet feel either; I have only been on for 3 months.

Positive changes are taking place - one great victory - having the NHA Board meetings now uploaded on YouTube by NOM - the ED resisted this for a variety of reasons - even saying the costs to videotape would be too exorbitant...Now residents can participate in the meetings by viewing their during or after Board meetings!

some frustration with inefficiency

connecting with others in Noho with whom I might otherwise not know

I deeply cared about my City and in working with a highly marginalized population even amongst others with disabilities,I wanted to support their 'voices'wanted to put my money where my

Learning other perspectives from fellow members and the community at large

Battling climate change and developing an example for other communities

service to a needed sector

understanding better the legislative & ordinance structure of city actions & and various application review process

Using my skills in public participation and consensus decision-making to widen civic engagement.

Contributing to the city

Learning about statewide regulations and key actors in the conservation field.

Making new friends, improving my understanding of the issues that truly matter my neighbors in this community.

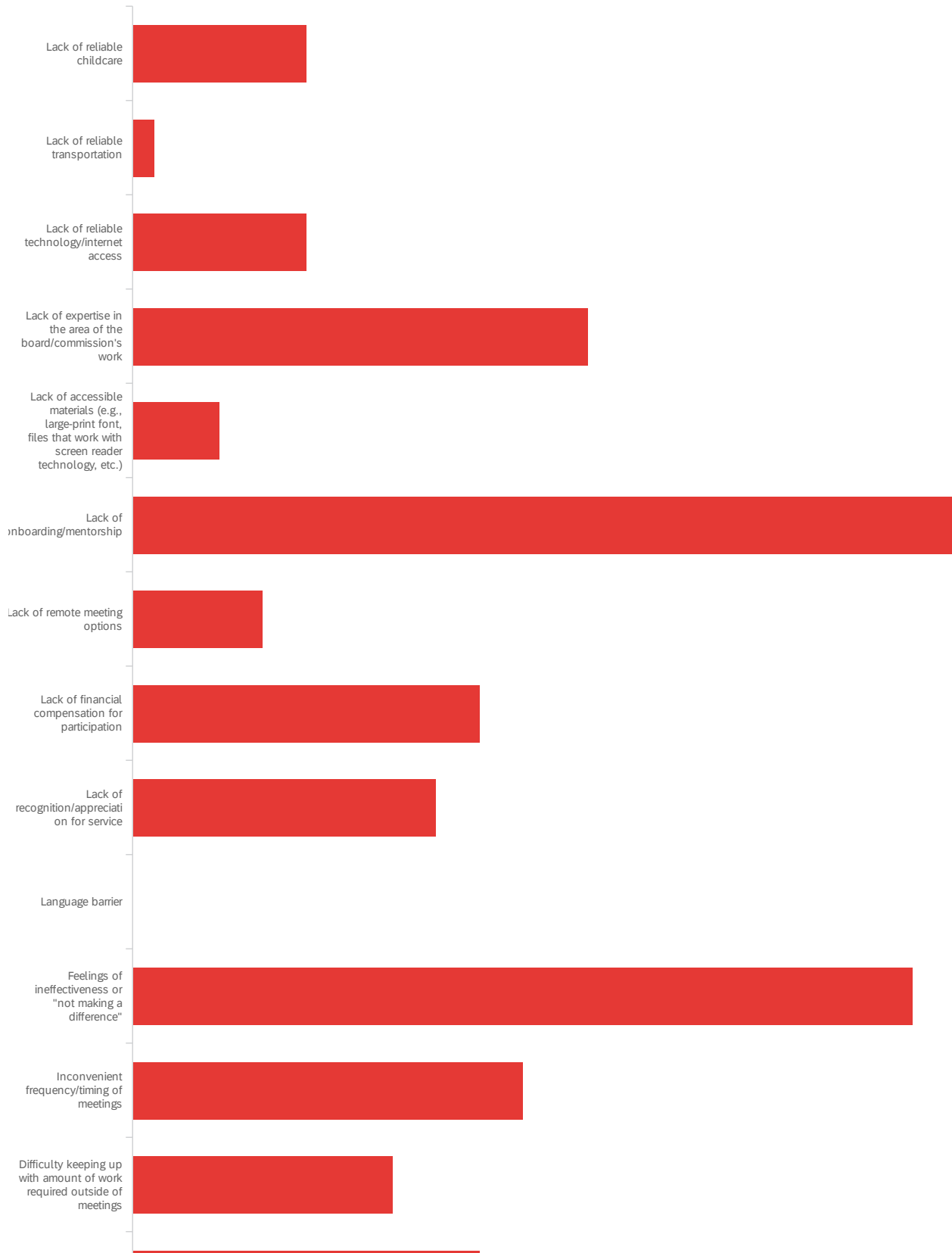
Inspiring others to participate

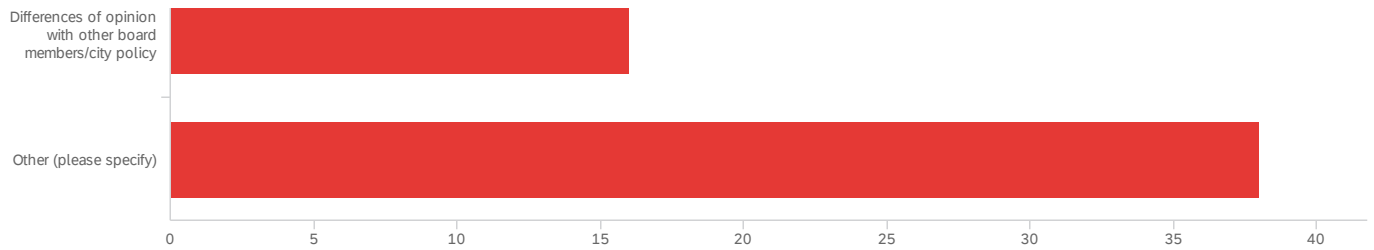
I am too new to have an opinion; The Arts Council is more chaotic than anticipated. I'm still gathering information.

meeting neighbors, city employees and elected officials

Q3-Serving - What barriers or challenges have you experienced to your service, if any?

Check all that apply.





#	Field	Choice Count
1	Lack of reliable childcare	3.39% 8
2	Lack of reliable transportation	0.42% 1
3	Lack of reliable technology/internet access	3.39% 8
4	Lack of expertise in the area of the board/commission's work	8.90% 21
5	Lack of accessible materials (e.g., large-print font, files that work with screen reader technology, etc.)	1.69% 4
6	Lack of onboarding/mentorship	16.10% 38
7	Lack of remote meeting options	2.54% 6
8	Lack of financial compensation for participation	6.78% 16
9	Lack of recognition/appreciation for service	5.93% 14
10	Language barrier	0.00% 0
11	Feelings of ineffectiveness or "not making a difference"	15.25% 36
12	Inconvenient frequency/timing of meetings	7.63% 18
13	Difficulty keeping up with amount of work required outside of meetings	5.08% 12
14	Differences of opinion with other board members/city policy	6.78% 16
15	Other (please specify)	16.10% 38
		236

Showing rows 1 - 16 of 16

Q3-Serving_15_TEXT - Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)

Occasional time conflicts if my work requires me to be elsewhere.

I didn't really feel very necessary except to complete a quorum

I served pre-pandemic so there were no zoom options. I think zoom options are helpful, but also feel like that might have made it more difficult to get to know other members

I felt very lost on the Water Committee. I had no training in the services we discussed.

Other (please specify)

Being related as 'less than' by the ED, NHA Attorney, and other board members. For example, when I brought up a concern of the ED calling me at home my first month on the job to get 'assurance' that I would vote for her Chair Choice - she gossiped negatively about a sitting board Commissioner (who I didn't know) and said her Chair Choice 'is so nice I'm afraid that if she doesn't get Chair, she'll quit!' A month before my appointment the ED said of another- 'he was evicted...'. No investigation ever - Board and Attorney have her version of 'supporting the chair' and openly complained that I was taking up too much air time being up this issue. The and now, I wish I had legal counsel to file a federal discrimination suit!!!

As an advisory board only I don't feel the recreation commission as a whole has much input any longer

how to do meaningful work without a budget or staff

It seems like at least two members want to make things better but the longer-standing members are not focused on the same issues, and although the issues get brought up and discussed, and even planned for the following meetings, those discussions still do not get on the agenda or take place. A lack of direction in the mission of the group. Old mission is different than new (mysteriously changed) mission? The vice-chair takes liberty without discussions on what gets shared; for example in one situation, a member had applied to a new board as themselves, but upon going to the new board was announced as having a title related to the group I am rating. They had no idea how that had happened, and that's when the vice-chair said they had a discussion with a member of the new board and they had agreed the member should have this identifying title in the new group. Why did that not get discussed? It seems like things get dismissed without discussion. Or changed without discussion.

Balancing the need to perform at an acceptable level with other professional commitments

Infrequency of meetings

nothing yet but I am very new to the Board.

Understanding the complexities and fiscal limitations of municipal gov't. Although it is interesting and part of the "territory". Thank goodness we have an excellent knowledgeable chair.

Lack of racial awareness and lack of desire to have discussions about race that don't center whiteness and white experiences

I have not experienced barriers.

combating the pervasive "not in my backyard" (NIMBY) sentiment among residents created longer than needed meetings and kept us from focusing on what our board had legitimate control over.

The sometimes mean-spirited letters. The amount of letters/calls to address. The meetings frequently ended very late (sometimes past midnight) which was obviously untenable.

The Conservation Commission is still meeting remotely, which greatly increases my ability to participate in the twice monthly meetings. I have learned a LOT about the Wetlands Protection Act and the City Wetland Ordinance since I started on the Commission, but know I could learn a lot more that would greatly help me in my service. I am a single parent with a limited income and further learning has been out of my budget since I joined the commission, but I would love to take advantage of it if money was not a barrier.

Transportation, childcare & \$\$ compensation have not been issues for me but I feel they are barriers for involving many other residents of the city

I am new to service on two boards. In neither case was there any orientation or any introduction to other members. While I understand the need for remote meetings during the peak of COVID, we are still meeting remotely which makes it particularly hard for new members to get a feel for how things work and to get to know other members. After a year on one of these boards I am still not really clear what it's purpose or authority is.

NIMBYism was depressing

Meetings need to have a time limit. Our productivity improved when that happened.

Other (please specify)

Was working full-time when I served (3 different committees/commissions).

Parking. It's really off-putting when the parking folks ticket cars of committee members/chairs who are giving up their time to serve the city, especially in the City Hall lot

On the first committee in which I served, it felt like it was up to new members to catch up on who was who and what was going on. I sat in on a few meetings of my current committee before joining as well as having a long conversation with a member and felt more "up to speed".

I no longer am a resident of Northampton

lack of childcare led to my only volunteering to serve after my children had grown up; limits of work that can be accomplished with only one monthly meeting

Other board members do not take ownership of projects. Emphasis on uniformity over problem-solving

city solicitor greatly limited our scope

I can see all these factors being prohibitive for some prospective members!

At times the often laborious process to accomplish outcomes or state law or regulation applying to volunteers as special municipal employees but is really practically and in reality non-applicable. Conflict of Interest law that may apply to unpaid volunteers with no actual or nominally 'perceived' one means one may not serve on a board if also involved in a similar volunteer capacity for another organization for example.

Conflict of interest would negatively impact my business and livelihood.

none of the above

I'm a non-technical citizen in a technical arena; thus I am taking courses through the Nass Association of Conservation Commissioners and finding it enlightening.

difficulty continuing to feel connective and effective after almost 3 years of being only on zoom

Luckily, I found other resources and trainings in the field. I have attended workshops, webinars, conferences and conventions - unfortunately NHA has refused to pay for my participation. I was the ONLY board member who had to pay their own expenses to participate in the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials - the ED said there was no money for me to attend that meeting. Btw, I am one course shy of obtaining NAHRO Certification. As a Board member, I'm am not reliant of the ED to train us on our responsibilities, roles, and rules. On a consistently level, I am singled out in Board members by the ED and Chair in their efforts to embarrass, harass, and discredit me; yet their efforts only embolden me.

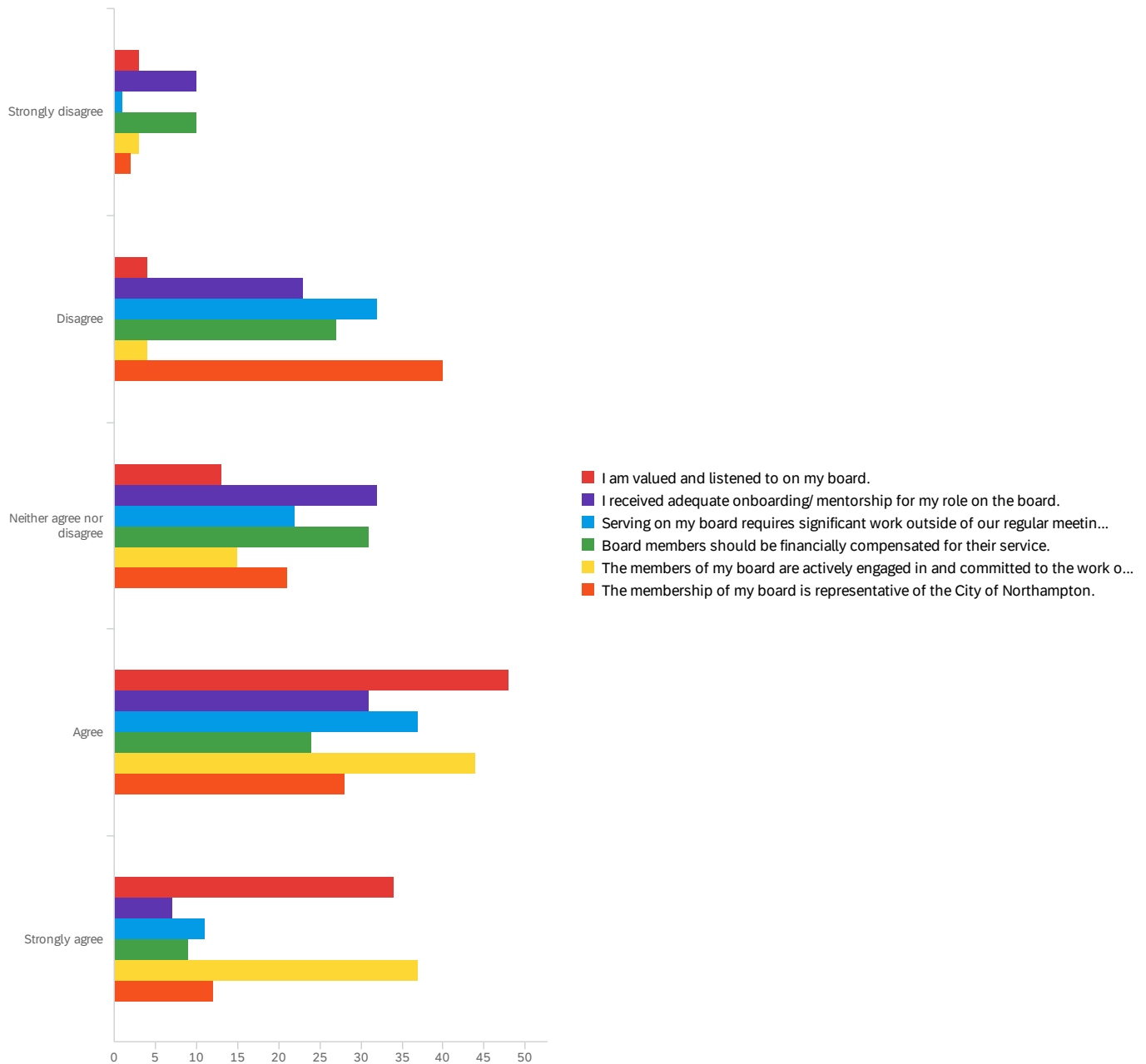
unpredictable meeting times

open meeting law requirements

Public vitriol & antagonization

Q4-Serving - Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements

about serving on your board/commission.



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	I am valued and listened to on my board.	1.00	5.00	4.04	0.94	0.88	102
2	I received adequate onboarding/ mentorship for my role on the board.	1.00	5.00	3.02	1.09	1.18	103

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
3	Serving on my board requires significant work outside of our regular meetings.	1.00	5.00	3.24	1.04	1.08	103
4	Board members should be financially compensated for their service.	1.00	5.00	2.95	1.12	1.25	101
5	The members of my board are actively engaged in and committed to the work of the board.	1.00	5.00	4.05	0.96	0.92	103
6	The membership of my board is representative of the City of Northampton.	1.00	5.00	3.08	1.09	1.20	103

#	Field	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
1	I am valued and listened to on my board.	2.94% 3	3.92% 4	12.75% 13	47.06% 48	33.33% 34	102
2	I received adequate onboarding/ mentorship for my role on the board.	9.71% 10	22.33% 23	31.07% 32	30.10% 31	6.80% 7	103
3	Serving on my board requires significant work outside of our regular meetings.	0.97% 1	31.07% 32	21.36% 22	35.92% 37	10.68% 11	103
4	Board members should be financially compensated for their service.	9.90% 10	26.73% 27	30.69% 31	23.76% 24	8.91% 9	101
5	The members of my board are actively engaged in and committed to the work of the board.	2.91% 3	3.88% 4	14.56% 15	42.72% 44	35.92% 37	103
6	The membership of my board is representative of the City of Northampton.	1.94% 2	38.83% 40	20.39% 21	27.18% 28	11.65% 12	103

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

Q1-Vacancies - When there is a vacancy on your board, what is the process for filling that vacancy?

When there is a vacancy on your board, what is the process for filling that...

Nothing official in place

unknown

no stated process - previously contacted the mayor's office

Slow and lengthy process tied with bureaucracy.

That was not clear

I believe it happens all through the mayor's office; we do not find out about a new member until they have already been chosen

Board members are asked to spread the word about the vacancy, but are not otherwise involved in filling the vacancy

Current members have suggested names of folks who should be encouraged to apply--and in some cases have actively encouraged others to apply.

Word of mouth, as far as I know

I don't know and it didn't come up during the tenure of our committee

We ask people who we think have an interest and ideally the city would put out a press release.

Not sure

Finding out how to apply, interview with mayor or city council member, name and resume submitted to selection committee, council approved and votes, contacted by committee to serve on, get sworn in by city clerk, study and take test on meeting rules and other legal issues then take test. State tenure on board.

To be honest, this is unclear to me. I believe the city staff assigned to our Board notifies the Mayor's Office who then recruits applicants (?). Our board regularly has vacancies that seem difficult to fill.

Word of mouth?

I haven't experienced this.

my board no longer exists

Three ways: Election, pro-forma membership from other boards, and mayoral selection

Telling people by word of mouth, if it is a specific position it was by nomination and election

When there is a vacancy on your board, what is the process for filling that...

social media promotion, current members share through their networks; this leads to a limited pool - we aren't reaching the people beyond our current reach

Community networking; word of mouth

All boards, commissions or committees I served on were at the prerogative of the Mayor so had to apply with that Office. A couple I was recruited for because of my KSAs and professional work at that time so I agreed and did not apply.

Two CPA slots (including mine) are elected. The other seven are filled by the mayor, city council, or represent other Northampton boards/committees

We ask of our staff member to list this as an opening

there are seats for people with different areas of expertise, the mayor appoints someone who qualifies

I am not aware of how board positions are filled.

we have vacancies but nobody seems to know others with expertise in our area who are willing to put in the time to serve.

Board of registrars have established procedures including approval by city council

I have an outreach email that explains the vacancy and role of the board member that I email to our current board & my network. Board members are asked to share w their networks and on social media.

Q2-Vacancies - What qualifications, background, or interests would you, as chair, seek in a new member of your board?

What qualifications, background, or interests would you, as chair, seek in...

lived experience and willingness to speak up about it

doesn't matter

marginalized identities, strong interest in equity work, commitment to work outside of monthly meetings

tied to making a difference in the sections he or she is applying for

Works well with others

Interest in the work of the board and commitment to preparation for and attendance at meetings

Interest in the Department, understanding of the role as a City Board member (advisory vs regulatory)

Technical experience, more diverse backgrounds, term limits

I am not a chair - I was a vice-chair (applies to the next 2 questions)

Good listening and communication skills, a commitment to public service, formal education in the specific area and/or advocacy skills..

Intelligence, relevant experience, calm, open minded

Someone thats very close to or at the age group being served, Someone from a service background and someone for other management or supervisory roles.

Not every member needs to have technical background or skills (engineering, traffic, wetlands, legal, etc) but some of this experience by at least a few members is helpful. Our Board traditionally has older, professional, college educated types who own their own homes. More members of diverse racial & economic backgrounds are needed.

Ability and willingness to learn local ordinances, zoning code, etc and commitment to preparing for meetings, reading staff memos, site visits

Experience--lived, skills, connections--as is relevant to the board.

commitment to improving the city

The backgrounds of the members is determined by the board's charter. Beyond that, new members should be willing to attend all meetings, to familiarize themselves with all material distributed at or between meetings, and to be willing to take on subcommittee assignments

Low-income background, immigrant background, business background, bilingual backgtound, etc...

people living on fixed / low incomes who are deeply impacted by financial decisions; younger members; bi/multi lingual

What qualifications, background, or interests would you, as chair, seek in...

Respect for other members and the public's interactions

People who will actually do some work, have KSAs or education to bring to the table, if an Advisory Body the issue of their meetings may be useless as has no outcome or the advice of course can be dismissed or minimized.

We definitely benefit from the expertise that the members representing other boards bring. For the other appointed (and elected) positions, I think qualifications, etc. are less important than greater social, economic and racial diversity.

relevant work or personal experience to promoting affordable housing

Earnestness, thoughtfulness and open mindedness are more important than technical knowledge.

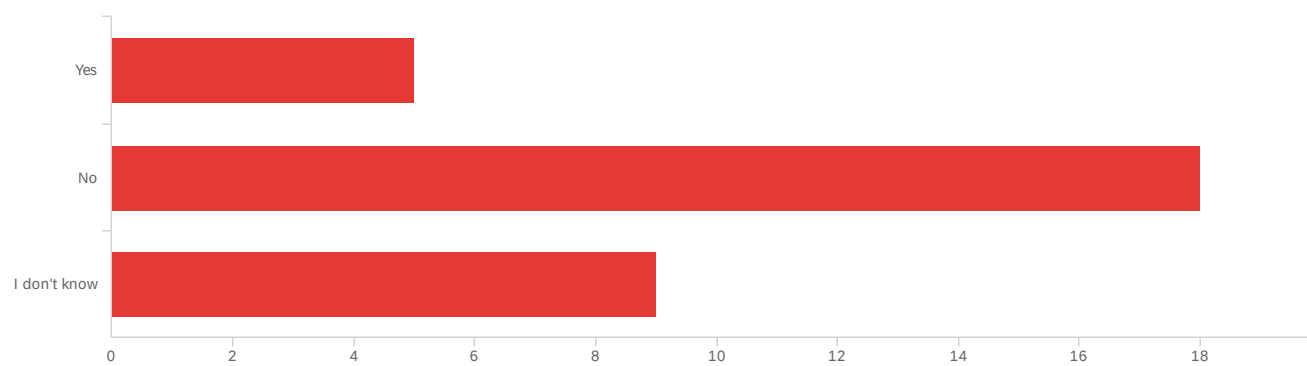
expertise in one of those areas (architecture, construction, real estate, preservation

Knowledge of the City, strong communication skills, initiative, and respect for others.

expertise in the area of affordable housing, especially the planning and building processes.

I am no longer chair of a board

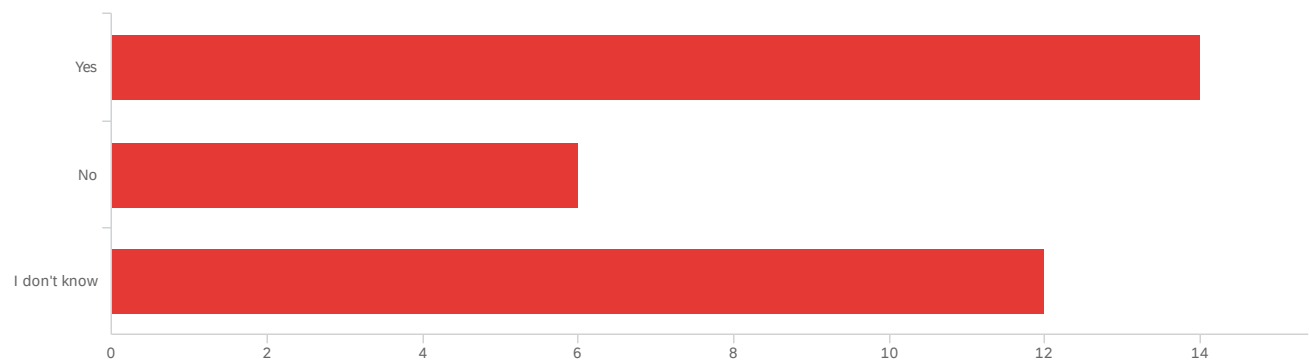
Q3-Vacancies - Does the Mayor’s office/City Council consult with you, as chair, during the process of filling vacancies (e.g., to share the applicant pool, to consult on desired qualifications/interested for potential candidates, etc.)?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Does the Mayor's office/City Council consult with you, as chair, during the process of filling vacancies (e.g., to share the applicant pool, to consult on desired qualifications/interested for potential candidates, etc.)?	1.00	3.00	2.13	0.65	0.42	32

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes	15.63% 5
2	No	56.25% 18
3	I don't know	28.13% 9
		32

Q4-Vacancies - Would you prefer for the Mayor’s office/City Council to give you as chair greater involvement in the process of filling vacancies?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Would you prefer for the Mayor's office/City Council to give you as chair greater involvement in the process of filling vacancies?	1.00	3.00	1.94	0.90	0.81	32

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes	43.75% 14
2	No	18.75% 6
3	I don't know	37.50% 12
		32

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

Q5-Vacancies - How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the process of selecting new members for your board?

How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the process of selecti...

Better outreach to diverse backgrounds/community members

keep it simple

mayor's office can share applications of prospective applicants with the chairs before they (applicants) are fully vetted by the office. Currently, chair is only asked to affirm/deny name(s) without benefit of a fuller conversation and immediately before the names are submitted to the city council.

Significantly by shorting the process and using more resources.

It would be good if it happened in a timelier way

Consult me (chair) about the skills needed and desired for board membership

Complete transparency about the process, understanding of the role, commitment to having a diverse (in all aspects of the definition) Board

Public outreach

Being clear about the charge, responsibilities, timeline, and what type of candidates and skills the city is seeking

Help with publicity

Streamline the process.

1) An annual forum / speed-dating event might be helpful where potential applicants could meet reps from all of the city boards / commissions for informal Q & A 2) More direct & timely feedback to an applicant once they have submitted an online application. I have heard too many times that these applications seem to disappear into a black hole. 3) applicants might be required to cc: their City Councilor on their application so the Councilor can help shepherd their application through the process.

I always wanted to make short videos about what our board does and use those to generate interest in serving.

Again, proactively seek out under-represented groups and provide the support they need to participate.

not sure, as I was never directly consulted on selecting new members

Consultation with the Chair and perhaps one or two other current members of the committee

Increase knowledge of local govt. within local communities and train board members on the process for making involvement more flexible or accomodating

I'm not sure

yes, Publicity of Board openings to be filled and expedited approval process

How do you think the City of Northampton can improve the process of selecti...

There appears to be very little outreach, the city website often only lists members and vacancies - little information on what type of applicant is desired, the time requirements, etc.

Please see my comments above re: "outreach."

Ask us and involve us each time there is a vacancy....we know what each of us brings and what the departing person added.

?

When board/commission opportunities arise, the expectations need to be clear. Also, an onboarding guidebook would be helpful so that everyone understands how boards/commissions operate, Robert's Rules, etc.

Be more inviting to the community so more will want to serve. Be specific about areas of need. on the Housing Partnership we have people with interest but not enough with specific skills.

don't know if improvment is required

Support outreach for new applicants; pay board members do more folks apply

Q1-Recommendations - How do you think the City of Northampton might reduce barriers to service for residents of Northampton?

How do you think the City of Northampton might reduce barriers to service f...

Be more intentional and transparent

Public info on the City Website about "What does each Board do?". Hold a public info session on that topic, advertise it in the Gazette.

outreach with education about boards, onboarding with citywide trainings, support for underrepresented residents with barriers

Find ways to communicate to residents what boards/commissions exist, information about them, and who to contact with interest/inquiries. Use reassuring language that all are welcome to be involved.

more opportunities, more transparent communication

Balance boards

Partner with Forbes Library and set up an exhibit of what's going on in the different city committees in the Forbes gallery or lobby. Forbes is a friendly, welcoming place and many people use it. It could help promote the committees. An open house at the library where committee members come to talk about what is involved with serving on different committees could be a fun event.

I think that there can be more public-facing programming to make the process transparent and welcoming. Group workshops and training like Emerge MA and New American Leaders can be a model from which to develop pathways for people interested but unfamiliar.

Wider information basis

By publicising the value and actions of boards.

pay people

Vacancies listed prominently on city homepage

Compensation. Clarity about the overall time commitment.

I don't feel qualified to answer this question.

By making application easier. I had to search for the application to the Disability Commission, but that was about 17 years ago. I was asked to serve on the Water/Sewer Fee Committee by Councilor LaBarge so that one was easy. The meetings were held in locations I could get to easily.

Get out more info about services of residents needed when vacancies accure. Write articles for the local newspaper about the needs of the community and the needs of the boards that help the community.

Advertise more and target underrepresented populations

How do you think the City of Northampton might reduce barriers to service f...

Well, the concept of appointing people of color and other under-representative and under-served populations is commendable but factor in how we can be pressured to 'go along to get along' - the microaggressions are outrageous...'you are new'...'Have you read the ByLaws' when I asked why some of the ByLaws are not followed - for example '3 Standing Committees' - one was a Grievance Committee - two different responses Chair and ED D. 'We have a Grievance Policy for tenants' was the ED's response - later I learned tenants in federal properties aren't covered by the lease 'grievance- even more reason for that Committee to operate on the Board. I brought up my concern that residents living in HIHampshire Heights have been enduring flood in the basements when it rains - for over 10 years - many of the residents especially children have a host of allergies, etc.. The ED said 'the lease states for them not to put furniture items in the basement because of possible water damage. Actually one Board member, a former Council member in that Ward said she was aware of the flooding s on that property for years. They both looked at me in disbelief when I said 'residents deserve to life in safe and sanitary conditions and NHA should give those residents with watered basements a voucher to go elsewhere while Housing fixes the flooding, removes mold and mildew. Supposedly the ED found funding from DHCD but was evasive on the start and completion date. This is worrisome because NHA got funding five years ago to PowerWash Salvo House and it finally happened the end of November 2022

Be more responsive

Communication and transparency

more publicity re requirements of the job, scope of work, time commitment, education or knowledge needed

Figure out a way to have public comment that is not divisive

I resigned from the board, because I was extremely disappointed in what I found to be the hypocrisy of the board members. In the interest of no bias, they represented definitive bias, and I could not live with participating in such behavior.

Being creative with financial/technical support for people who need it to be able to serve; making it easier for people to access information about service and to get up to speed

Improve transparency throughout process; make sure that administrative issues like zoom links and inconsistent meeting times don't get in the way of people serving; show recognition and appreciation for service

Create a tracking method for applications. Respond to applications even if the person is not chosen. Give a timeline for how to know when they will be contacted. Try to get more members who are representative of the groups or missions they are working on.

No comment

I am fortunate to have had access to flexibility and time/adequate finances to serve; others don't have that. I could devote large blocks of time and still do on Friends or Inc boards. but get discouraged when I witness minimal participation of other council members in the activities of certain city departments

Signage throughout the community with webpage/QR code to lead residents to the important city information.

Provide more information and feedback. Be specific about whether certain boards are looking for particular skills or backgrounds for applicants.

Perhaps providing a stipend and also ensuring opportunities for flexibility of when regular meetings and necessary collaborative work can be done

Survey such as this should help better understand what barriers might exist and--if those barriers are high enough, only those who met no barriers to service are likely to be in this interview pool

Make the criteria for board member expertise clearer and be transparent about both the process and timeline for appointments. Should only experts with a long career history in particular fields apply to openings?

I see no barriers

How do you think the City of Northampton might reduce barriers to service f...

Some onboarding material inviting people to reach out where there are vacancies, and information about how to begin attending meetings in the first place. Most people I have encountered, especially with zoom, don't understand that they are allowed to even attend as members of the public.

As said earlier, publicize opening more widely in many places and emphasize desire for BIPOC residents to apply. Then give a lot of mentorship/onboarding to new members.

Not sure, some more effective outreach method. Not just City website. A recruiting event? I think some folks don't know what these "boards" do or think they have to have a lot of expertise. We need voices from all types of folks who care about the issue our "board/commission" deals with.

As a semi-retired professional, there are no financial or family care issues, if participation is going to be more diverse there may need to be financial compensation and other measures to allow more participation

Listen to long time citizens

All boards must have members from all/both sides.

Compensation, childcare reimbursement

active recruiting by the Mayor's office to ensure the work of the boards are representative not only of the City but of the people most impacted by their work.

Stipend. Courtesy.

See previous answer

Publicize volunteer opportunities to people who don't have lots of other commitments and challenge them to make a choice to prioritize service-young people who care deeply, retirees who care about the city. If people are at a stage in life when they can't afford the time and commitment, please encourage them to plan on volunteering on bodies later AND in the meantime help them participate in the 100s of volunteer opportunities which require less commitment.

Answer all applications.

Quicker turn around time. Acknowledgement of application status. Involve Board Members in recruitment. Ensure transparency in selection.

Make the process more open to ALL RESIDENTS and not those who are favorites of the mayor or members of the Council...if you continue to appoint members that only reflect your opinions you will never hear of any problems that maybe brewing within this City - this is a common occurrence for who you appoint to these committees right now!

review comments as to why folks resigned or aren't applying and make the changes that seem appropriate.

Compensation can be tricky as it can influence motives but if there is some way to compensate for the barriers of things like transportation, child care, or paid time off if committees meet during working hours.

There are many residents who would love to serve if they knew what openings existed. Advertising would solve a huge barrier

The City can actively define its own diversity metrics for boards and the portfolio that it seeks. It can also make it widely known whenever a spot is open and wait to interview for this position until the pool has met pre-defined metrics by the city.

I was on the school committee so there are some election hoops to jump through that are understandable. On volunteer boards, perhaps limit the length of meetings and have virtual options for people. For elected boards, provide laptops to all new members (if needed) that would be returned when they exit the office.

How do you think the City of Northampton might reduce barriers to service f...

Streamline the process and being mapped out.

By not waiting for those who are not in the "loop" to come to the City to offer their time, but for a decent method of communication is devised, as well as reaching out to under-represented people and empowering them to have the confidence and sense of welcome to be part of the City

Conduct a value stream map to understand where there is a lack of communication and conduct root cause analysis.

be more transparent about process

I think funding either for service (which could then fund education that would support committee work, or childcare) would go a long way in making my service feel more sustainable. I know that might be complicated and a big precedent change, so secondarily a fund for related education for committee members would also help a lot in skill and knowledge building around the work we do and would make me much more confident in my service.

I think serving on a board takes less time and effort than people think.

1) provide a stipend and other creative incentives to board members. Board members can confidentially decide to accept or waive these incentives.
2) assure that some Board seats are "reserved" for representatives of BIPOC, youth, people w/ disabilities and renters. I fully understand that these are exactly the missing voices we are trying to recruit and retain. #) continue the hybrid component of City meetings to allow those w/ transportation or mobility issues to more easily participate.

Clarify mission, goals and authority of all boards. Where appropriate, encourage cross board collaboration and conversation regarding complex policy and programmatic challenges such as affordable housing. Create a required and consistent onboarding process.

I think the City of Northampton would have to shift its thinking about the purpose of city service greatly. It would require a shift from a culture of "charitable" approach to city service (i.e. serving the city is an act of charity, usually done by wealthy people in their free time), to a culture that fosters empowerment and mutuality to contribute to our collective well-being. From what I know of both the history of Northampton politics as well as the history of American politics in general, ideas of "civic engagement" have always been laden with racial and class-based biases and histories. Who gets to be a part of "civics", deriving from "citizenship", has always been a political act--and defining (and therefore inherently excluding) who does and does not engage in civic participation has always been at the core of governance. And while this sounds very theoretical, we see it play out in Northampton every day. By carefully picking and choosing who serves on our city boards and our city council, city officials can carefully craft the participants of civic engagement based on their priorities and agendas. And so to truly increase access to serving our city would require a shift in the purpose of civic engagement to be more about a sharing of power and less about serving an agenda of city officials. A real shift that would have a purpose of sharing power and stake in the work of running our city would allow those who serve to actually see their work make changes in the city. It would also require more meaningful compensation where the city pays for the hard work and contributions of its residents. Ultimately, it is about increasing shared power to help people feel like their stake in city politics is meaningful and respected. It means participants feeling more deeply that putting time into civic engagement and civic service is a mutual process with beneficial and meaningful outcomes to our everyday lives, rather than being a cog in a machine of city politics. In the status quo, hours of work put in by everyday people on boards and commissions culminates into reports--mere recommendations to the mayor, with little to no guarantee that it could amount to anything. So I am curious about ways to help people's work mean more and be more tangible when they choose to serve our city.

Start a "take a kid to a board" program and see if school kids want to sit in on a meeting - it might help break down barriers/empower families to feel like part of the process.

Compensation, child care, mentorship

Improve onboarding and offer a description of how board participation typically works.

more public meetings and better communication between boards and the public

I think a mix of in person and remote options is ideal

Perhaps the mayor, in filling appointed seats, might look for qualified candidates instead of friends and political allies.

How do you think the City of Northampton might reduce barriers to service f...

Provide stipends/reimbursements for childcare, transportation, internet connection/equipment; provide mentorship from the start.

Hard to say. I cannot meet after dark, but other people are unavailable during the workday.

Consider creating a universally accessible hard-copy document and online process

Continue to have virtual meetings (provide assistance with any barriers for virtual participation). Consider decision-making that involves a consensus process. As one more of the police commission said, "I don't know Robert's Rules and I don't know who Robert is." Meeting schedules should consider both the members' availability and the public's. Determine the most efficient, but comprehensive way, to inform members about the Open Meeting Law. Focus on the essential issues of relevance. The state video-training for the Conflict of Interest Law overwhelms most committee members. Provide a document, or orientation, with the essential elements.

N/A

I don't think there are significant barriers to service if someone is seriously interested in the work of a specific committee. There should never be quick on-ramps for people who have a sudden, temporary interest in specific deliberations or projects, but I think the current process is adequately inclusive for the community. Finally, please do consider the parking issue: some members are elderly or have mobility issues that don't qualify for a specialized parking permit. If they are going to volunteer their time and wisdom through committee membership, we should make it easier for them to attend meetings, including the idea of moving more committees to JFK

Lack of public outreach and orientation documentation, lack of interest in discussing potential accommodations

Decentralize the mayor from the process.

Training programs that could lead to a position either in Northampton or a community in need.

Outreach to the community, including what the committees do, what the expectations are for members, etc. would be useful. For example, could there be information available at voting stations or the farmers' markets?

Follow up with people it's disheartening to apply to serve and then not even get a response

Actively recruit residents under the age of 30.

Instead of offering compensation, maybe there are some perks the city could offer participants.

Obtain a grant to fund stipends for people with low incomes. Spend more time in public housing developments to build relationships with people so that you can foster and/or discover their desire to participate. Ask them what would make it easier for them to attend. Childcare, take-out gift certificates for their families while they are in meetings, etc.

Pay, childcare, transportation, technology for zoom meetings

Continue the opportunity for remote participation; set equity targets for boards and committees that are representative of the city's demographics

Make remote (zoom) board meetings more typical

Pay board members. Schedule meetings more often, so missing one isn't missing an entire month. Continue robust remote options

Child care, reimbursement/compensation, actually seeking "everyday people"

Childcare, transportation stipend, virtual meeting options, paying members, more transparent application

How do you think the City of Northampton might reduce barriers to service f...

Convenient meeting times based on the collective desires of members (for example, I thought the years of Bicycle/Ped meeting at 7:30 am were for the convince of the planner)

For our commission in particular, we would appreciate being able to have more impact with our work. Our commission has wonderful intentions but lacks any city-backed omph or ability to inspire positive change. Sometimes it feels as though we're just spinning our wheels, which can be very frustrating. We want to be of service to the community, yet our work can feel a bit gossamer.

Problems of transportation, meeting times, etc. are difficult to solve. Outreach to populations that would provide diversity are spotty at best because whom does one contact in reality to do the 'ask'; perception of cronyism by existing board or city government, a 'handbook' of the specific board commission or committee one is joining. I authored one for one I served on as there was nothing and other Members didn't know either.

Make the information available more widely. Have an open info session once a year or so (depending on the frequency of how often you recruit candidates to various positions) to share information about the opportunities, how to get involved and apply, and what they are looking for in candidates. Those who have occupied the positions past and present could speak about their experience in service to the City. These sessions could be advertised beyond the usual City of Northampton postings, to career and professional development sites such as LinkedIn, etc. to tap individuals who are thinking about making these kinds of commitments.

At the least, acknowledge an applicant. Start with that.

See previous response

advertise openings and expectations

More transparency about needs/opportunities.

Make the openings to serve more transparent and advertise them more.

Meeting times might be a barrier for some people.

Promoting mentorship; publishing open seats and the value to the city; defining committee work ad a learning experience ;

I took the time to apply and was never even considered

I have the flexibility to attend daytime meetings but I know that not everyone can. If I had a child in daycare, I would not be able to serve.

Put something in newspaper when there are openings on committees.

Publicize board openings, provide training for board positions, continue remote option for members with transportation issues, provide a stipend, schedule meetings around members work schedules.

Clearer communication, a better and easier to use website, and someone to help facilitate/answer questions/assist with the process.

Remote meeting attendance has removed huge barriers to participation eg being wheelchair bound, mildly sick, out of town or pressed for time within a busy schedule. If you have sufficient interest, the work will reward you, you'll meet accomplished people and learn new skills or knowledge. The City cannot really induce disengaged citizens to suddenly pitch in and help. People have to bring forth their passion and commitment. But having a "Commission Fair" to publicize the kind of work done might help.

The issue is not the application process or the work required. In order of priority, I think the issues are 1) Most people just don't know about the opportunities, 2) are intimidated don't want to have to deal with the public given the polarizing and activist nature of politics these days and 3) the work can seem intimidating to the uninitiated. I suggest doing more to create awareness of these volunteer opportunities and maybe introducing the interested to some of the newer members of the committee of interest.

How do you think the City of Northampton might reduce barriers to service f...

Since we meet after work, our twice monthly meetings interfere with family and dinner for those with young children. Hybrid meetings help a little.

Absolutely continue with virtual meetings this significantly reduces barriers to being a member. I have noted a significant increase in the number of members of the public attending meeting as well. For the majority of people attending meetings in person is nearly impossible. The one I sit on meets at 4pm which is nearly impossible for a vast number of people to attend in person. Being able to attend virtually truly makes government accessible. I see more people attending meetings than ever before; from their office, kitchen table, cars, front porch, living room. Childcare, eldercare, travel, mobility and health concerns, transportation the barriers are removed.

?

Provide accommodations for people with learning difficulties or barriers

Add some monetary compensation. Do more outreach and community education about the need and desire for more community participation.

Have a regular list of vacancies in the Gazette, with contact info for more info including specific responsibilities and desired experience or skills. Also post openings at Forbes and Lilly libraries, on Nextdoor Northampton and Northampton Neighbors listserves.

It's hard. The value of participation is not high compared to the cost in time to most people with children.

Provide an Ombudsperson to help board members

Assistance in completing applications may assure that residents with skills/knowledge/experience may end up on the proper board

Pay board members and cancel Roberts rules of order

Q2-Recommendationsss - If you wish to provide a longer written testimony or other information relevant to the Select Committee's work, please do so here.

If you wish to provide a longer written testimony or other information rele...

I believe that city commissions should elect their own chairs who exercise leadership, set meeting agendas, and experience no conflicts of interest. I feel it was a bad decision by the former Mayor and city council to change the City's administrative code making city staff ex officio chairs of the TPC, NESC and UFC. To me, this is a significant barrier to serving on these commissions.

Balance the boards

nope

I was not chosen to work on policing commission, but I found no fault with the process as others with similar qualifications were placed on it, and I understand the need to have people of diverse backgrounds represented..

Serving on a board is a great opportunity. It takes commitment and time, which younger folks may lack.

I am in several boards and committees for the most part, I am valued by the organization, staff, board and volunteers except for NHA

Ignoring applications, and not letting people know the process is bad

we would love to have a more diverse membership on the committee, but we did not get to voice that request/we were not asked what we were looking for

For this board, I do not have much more to say. I think connection, building relationship, communication, and some form of mentorship can be supported without breaking open meeting law! I think there could be better education on open meeting law or reinforced better. There is a lot of nepotism in Western Mass. You do not see this so clearly in the rest of the state. In Boston I think business people are mostly chosen for boards and committees, but here in Western Mass its all about the personal connection and possibly world view. How could we improve on getting representation for more groups of people?

Thank you for what you do!

While appreciate everyone's service on the board, I think it makes sense to rotate in new people and new perspectives, including within my position as chair. Cities are constantly changing, and it is important to bring the next generation into the fold of leadership.

Volunteering for the city is an imensly rewarding honor. There are plenty of people who could be inspired to lend their attention and time if they understood how rewarding volunteering is.

For me as I have no insight into the process after submitting an application, would be to answer all applications in a timely manner.

This is a continuation of the previous response, as I wanted to add another idea for reducing barriers to serve. I would recommend that each committee or council have an orientation packet or some other type of process where a current member supports the mentoring of an incoming member. This is meant to support the transition period and to help generate a welcome sense of belonging. This can also help provide a point of clarification should there be information that needs referencing as well as to understand purpose and procedure of that committee.

I worked on the Disability Commission for 11 years. I served as clerk and a member. I always felt that other departments in the City didn't take us seriously and we were not used as we should have been

If you wish to provide a longer written testimony or other information rele...

There are issues dealing with handicapped clients that do not get addressed by the board. The board usually only addresses issues involving the streets, like curbs, parking spots etc. It would be nice to have other issues encountered by the handicap population where accommodations are not approved.

Since this is an online survey why is the box for contributions so small, I can only see a narrow bit of what I have written easily. This makes editing or rephrasing most difficult.

I moved on to other volunteer work since I've applied and it's been longer than a year since I've heard from anyone. Honestly, I don't even know the position I applied for at this moment in time.

I think that my service on the board has been largely irrelevant. I don't think that I can make any difference. I will not serve another term on this board because I feel it's strongly set up to do nothing.

I would be happy to say more, and give more written or verbal testimony as a follow up to this survey.

I'm a bit concerned about moves that have been made in city government that reduces reliance on city boards and in some cases places greater reliance on city council

A couple of years ago, one of the members of the Historical Commission. I had already been before the commission three times about making improvements to my home. That member said that the commission could not meet because they were short a couple of member, someone was ill, and they couldn't muster a quorum. That member knew my background as a librarian and archivist at an historical school, and recommended that I apply for one of the vacancies, which I did. Several weeks went by, and I did not hear anything. I called the mayor's office, and asked about the process. A gentleman told me he would look into it. The next day I got a phone call from the man, and he said there was no vacancy, and I was not selected. The next time I saw that member, he told me they were still looking to fill a vacancy.

I learned of a vacancy on the Council on Aging and volunteered by email to the mayor's office. The mayor's assistant said that the mayor had received my application. As far as I know, no one ever acted on it, and the vacancy was not filled.

1. Look at the work, our report, we did about 12 years ago on the Best Practices in Municipal Decision-Making Committee. There are items in there that are very relevant to your work with participation and service. 2. Bring back City School or some equivalent. 3. Consider the role of the public in influencing decision-making. There are many people who have not been interested in serving on a committee, or able due to time or other constraints you will be identifying, but could participate in shorter term roles with a board or committee. I would be happy to speak at greater length with one of more members of this committee.

I want to encourage you, as I think the work of this committee is among the most important and transformative things our city can do to reach a more perfect form of democracy. Serving is too often a luxury for those who have the time and resources to pursue a "hobby" like civil service, but the duty of our government to benefit all requires that we have an understanding of the needs of those who don't have such luxuries. The perspectives of such people need to be present, and their votes need to be cast when decisions are made on how to use our collective resources to tend to everyone's needs. I think of RBG saying there will be enough women on the Supreme Court once it is entirely made up of women. I think the idea there is that the pendulum has been stuck on such an extreme end of the spectrum that it must swing all the way to the other side before it can settle back to the middle. If you put a tremendous effort toward reducing economic barriers to service and you strive to really pack committees with historically underrepresented people, you may achieve a healthy mix of people from all walks of life. But you have to think big and aim for the stars to get there. Good luck!

Years ago, I participated in City School. The Mayor used that meeting process to educate the public. I'd like to see that resurrected, possibly in a video format.

I'm not sure that I have any solutions, but I do appreciate you all initiating this conversation.

I think the perception is that you need to be well connected with a select group of individuals to be taken seriously. This survey is the first acknowledgement I have received since I applied. It seems that an email communicating a thank you, we are pursuing other applicants, would provide a basic level of respect and appreciation to the applicant and an interest in a fair and transparent process. Good luck!

I was not informed of the conflict of interest rules before being appointed. I could not continue as it would negatively impact my business and my livelihood. I can never professionally be involved in any building I review as a member of the Historical Commission. As a self-employed architect, who specializes in historical buildings, I could not make the commitment.

If you wish to provide a longer written testimony or other information rele...

The antiquity of the laws around service, dialogue between members and between members and the public is a huge barrier to both inter- and intra-communication. The rules and laws that we are supposed to abide by are opaque and are not explained upon onboarding so no one in the council knows what the rules and regulations are; and for the most part when a rule or regulation is broken there isn't any support to help figure out how to move forward in a way that will avoid breaking them again. Many of these rules are also put in place to keep the government hidden from the public and ensuring that there is as little transparency as possible.

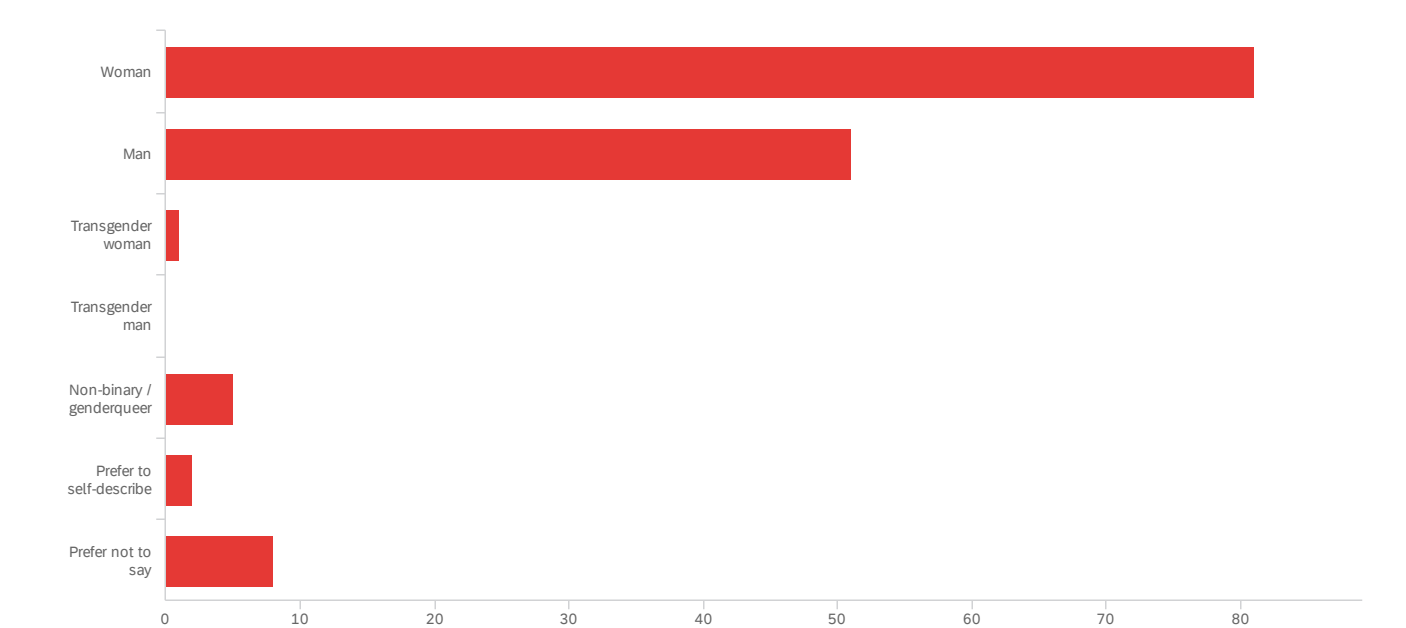
Outreach is needed. Most people think "The Government " is a black box of elites. The fact that 30 committees and commissions of volunteers do so much is not visible and not understood. There could be classes and presentations for high school students and at open meetings.

Virtual meetings makes government accessible!

?

...

Q1-Demographics - What is your gender identity?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
---	-------	---------	---------	------	---------------	----------	-------

1	What is your gender identity? - Selected Choice	1.00	7.00	1.89	1.55	2.41	148
---	---	------	------	------	------	------	-----

#	Field	Choice	Count
1	Woman	54.73%	81
2	Man	34.46%	51
3	Transgender woman	0.68%	1
4	Transgender man	0.00%	0
5	Non-binary / genderqueer	3.38%	5
6	Prefer to self-describe	1.35%	2
7	Prefer not to say	5.41%	8
			148

Showing rows 1 - 8 of 8

Q1-Demographics_6_TEXT - Prefer to self-describe

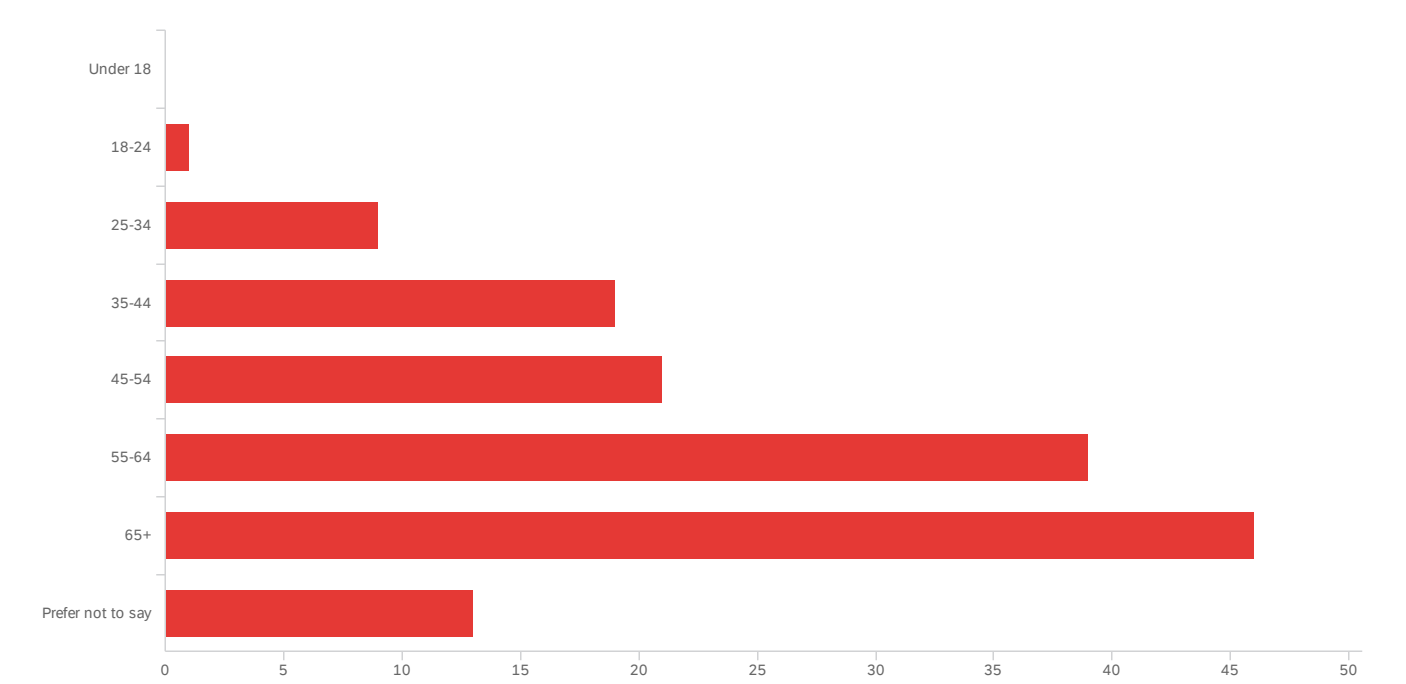
Prefer to self-describe

Prefer to self-describe

Female

This question is incorrectly posed. I am a biological male and my gender is male.

Q2-Demographics - What is your age?

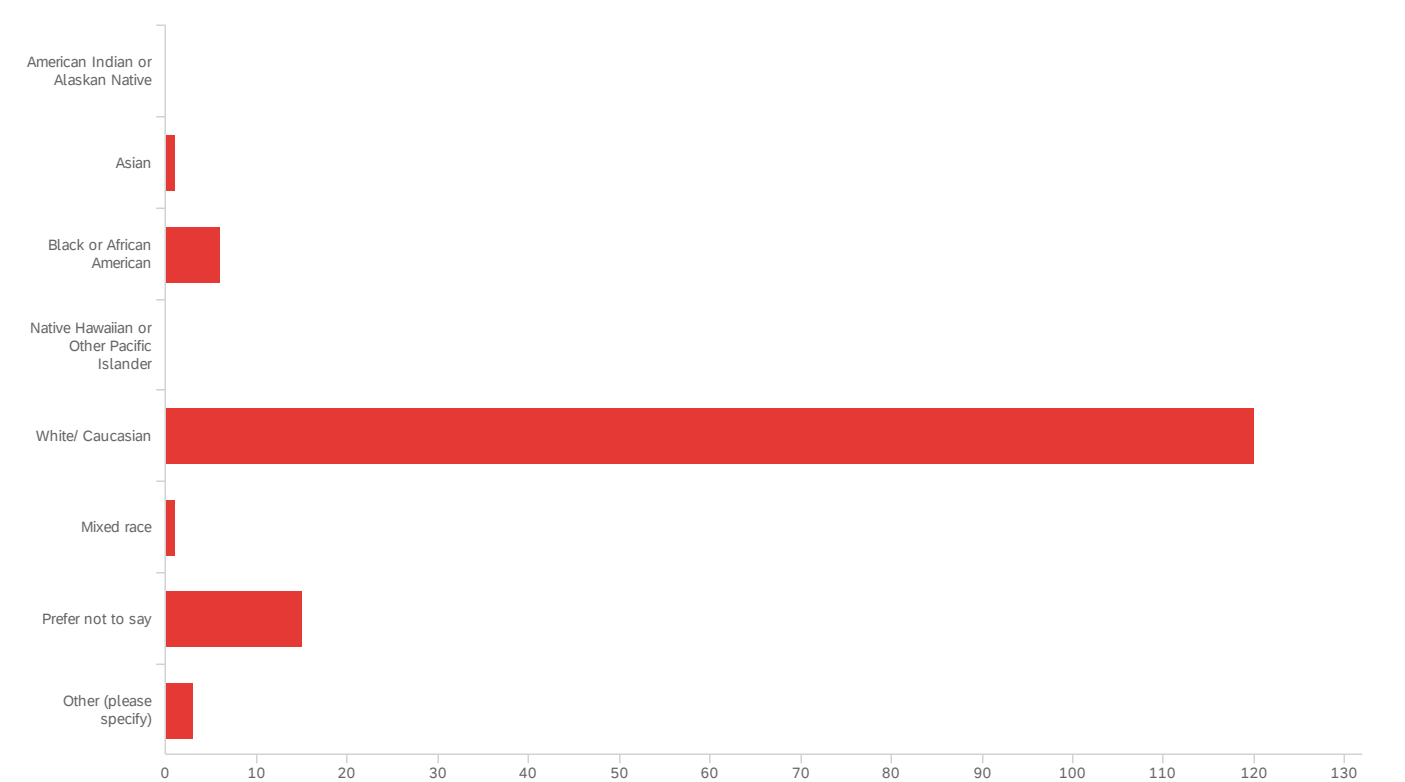


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your age?	2.00	8.00	5.88	1.40	1.96	148

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Under 18	0.00% 0
2	18-24	0.68% 1
3	25-34	6.08% 9
4	35-44	12.84% 19
5	45-54	14.19% 21
6	55-64	26.35% 39
7	65+	31.08% 46
8	Prefer not to say	8.78% 13

148

Q3-Demographics - What is your ethnic background?



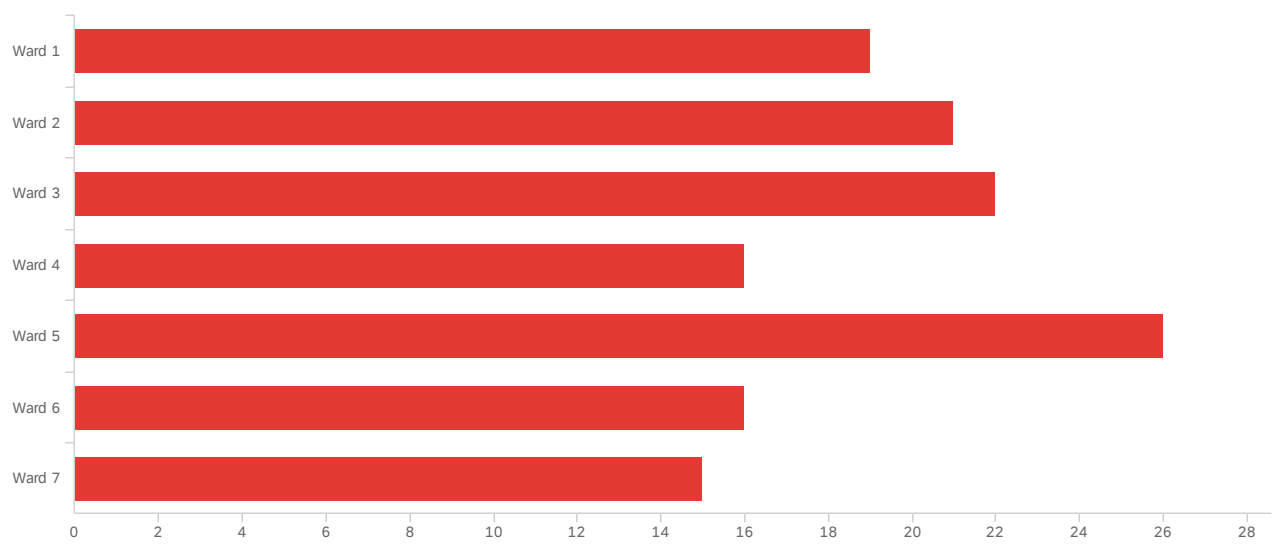
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your ethnic background? - Selected Choice	2.00	8.00	5.17	0.89	0.80	146

#	Field	Choice Count
1	American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.00% 0
2	Asian	0.68% 1
3	Black or African American	4.11% 6
4	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.00% 0
5	White/ Caucasian	82.19% 120
6	Mixed race	0.68% 1
7	Prefer not to say	10.27% 15
8	Other (please specify)	2.05% 3

Q3-Demographics_8_TEXT - Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)
Asian and Pacific Islander
Indigenous South American

Q4-Demographics - What ward do you live in?

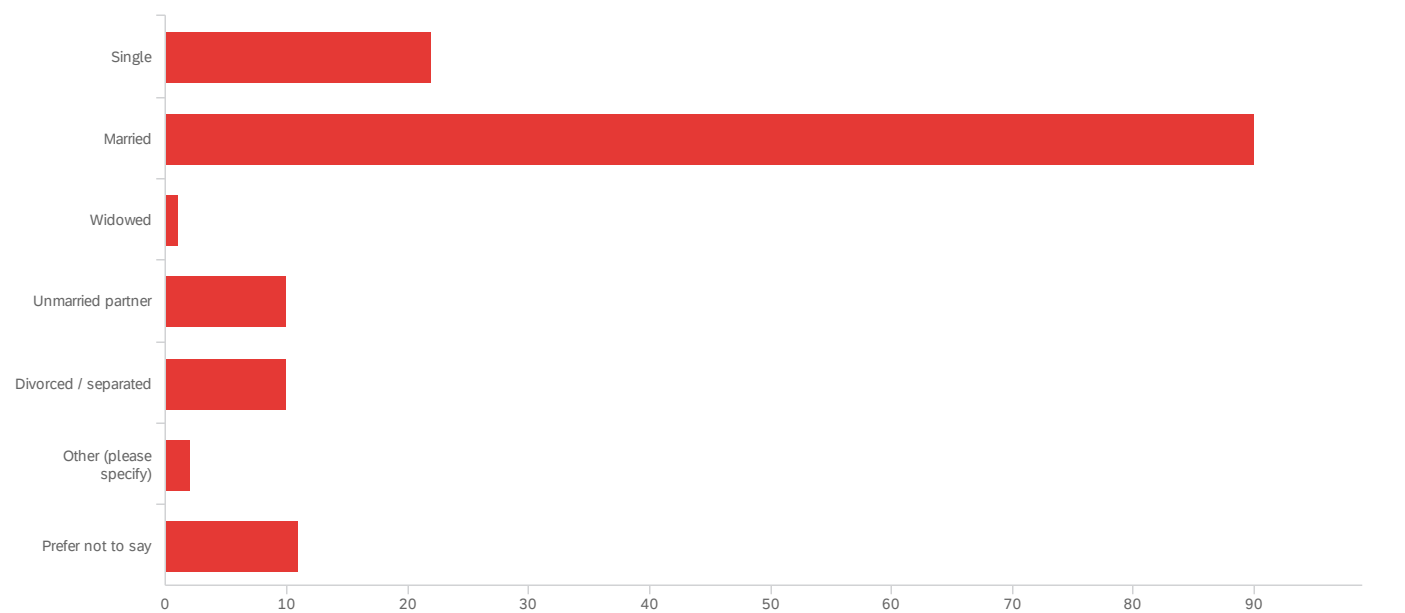


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What ward do you live in?	1.00	7.00	3.87	1.92	3.70	135

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Ward 1	14.07% 19
2	Ward 2	15.56% 21
3	Ward 3	16.30% 22
4	Ward 4	11.85% 16
5	Ward 5	19.26% 26
6	Ward 6	11.85% 16
7	Ward 7	11.11% 15
		135

Showing rows 1 - 8 of 8

Q5-Demographics - What is your marital status?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your marital status? - Selected Choice	1.00	7.00	2.63	1.66	2.75	146

#	Field	Choice	Count
1	Single	15.07%	22
2	Married	61.64%	90
3	Widowed	0.68%	1
4	Unmarried partner	6.85%	10
5	Divorced / separated	6.85%	10
6	Other (please specify)	1.37%	2
7	Prefer not to say	7.53%	11
			146

Showing rows 1 - 8 of 8

Q5-Demographics_6_TEXT - Other (please specify)

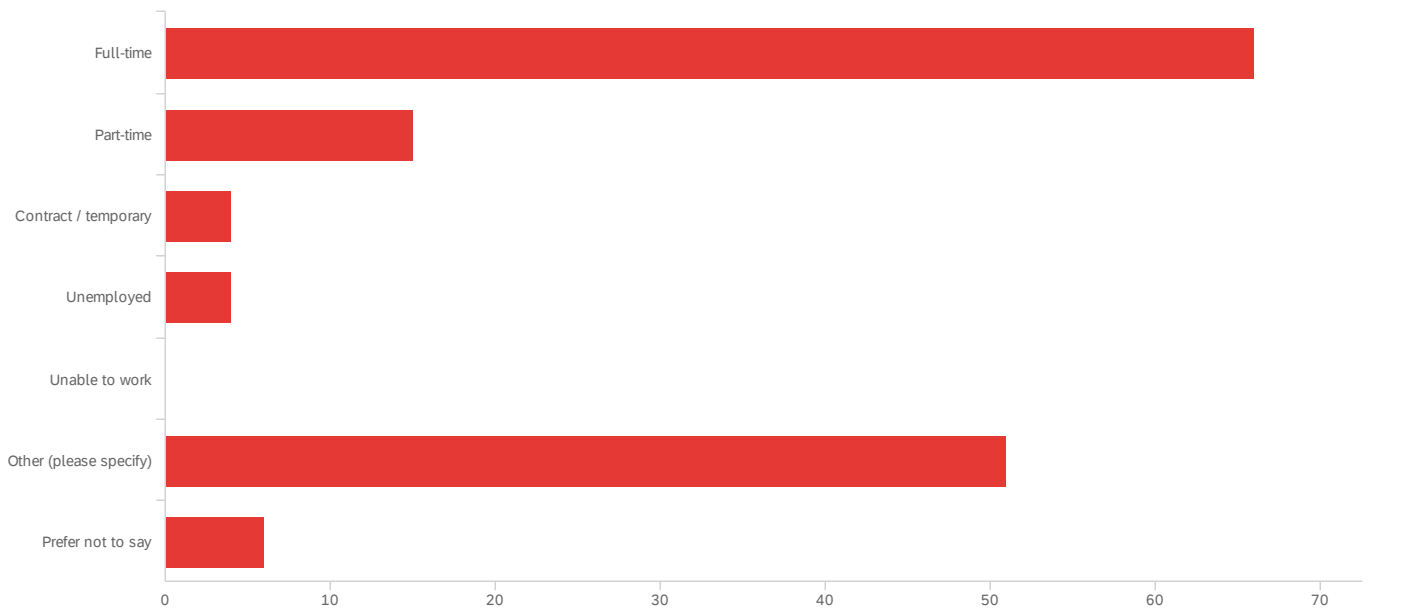
Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)

unmarried at the time of service

Partnered, not married

Q6-Demographics - What is your employment status?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
---	-------	---------	---------	------	---------------	----------	-------

1	What is your employment status? - Selected Choice	1.00	7.00	3.23	2.38	5.69	146
---	---	------	------	------	------	------	-----

#	Field	Choice	Count
1	Full-time	45.21%	66
2	Part-time	10.27%	15
3	Contract / temporary	2.74%	4
4	Unemployed	2.74%	4
5	Unable to work	0.00%	0
6	Other (please specify)	34.93%	51
7	Prefer not to say	4.11%	6
			146

Showing rows 1 - 8 of 8

Q6-Demographics_6_TEXT - Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)

Other (please specify)

Retired

retired

Volunteer work

Retired

Retired/Disabled

retired

Unemployed from injuries, yet working more than full-time on several boards and committees!

Retired

self employed

Retired

Retired

retired

Full time student

RETIRED

Retired

Retired (which should be an option for this question)

Disabled Veteran

retired

recently retired, formerly served as Full Time worker

Retired

Retired

Retired and proud of it!

Retired

retired

Other (please specify)

Retired

retired

Retired

Retired

Nonstipenditary Volunteer

volunteer

Retired and consulting work.

Retired

Student

In school for new career

Business owner

retired

Retired

retired

Retired

retired

Occasional community class offerings

Retired

Retired

Retired

Retired

Mostly retired. I work about 10 days/yr.

Retired

retired

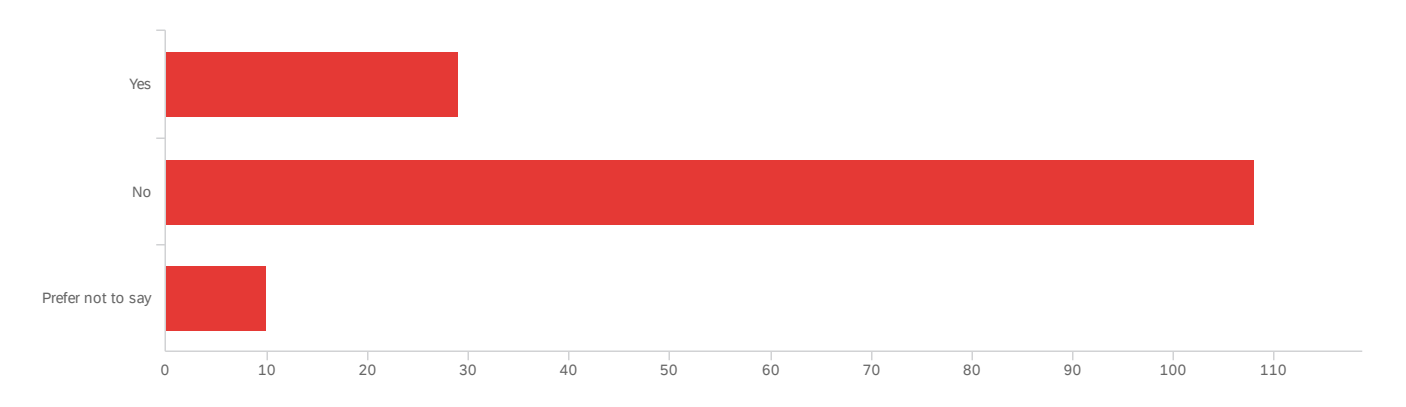
Other (please specify)

retired professionally but working elsewhere part time

mostly retired

retired

Q7-Demographics - Do you have a disability?

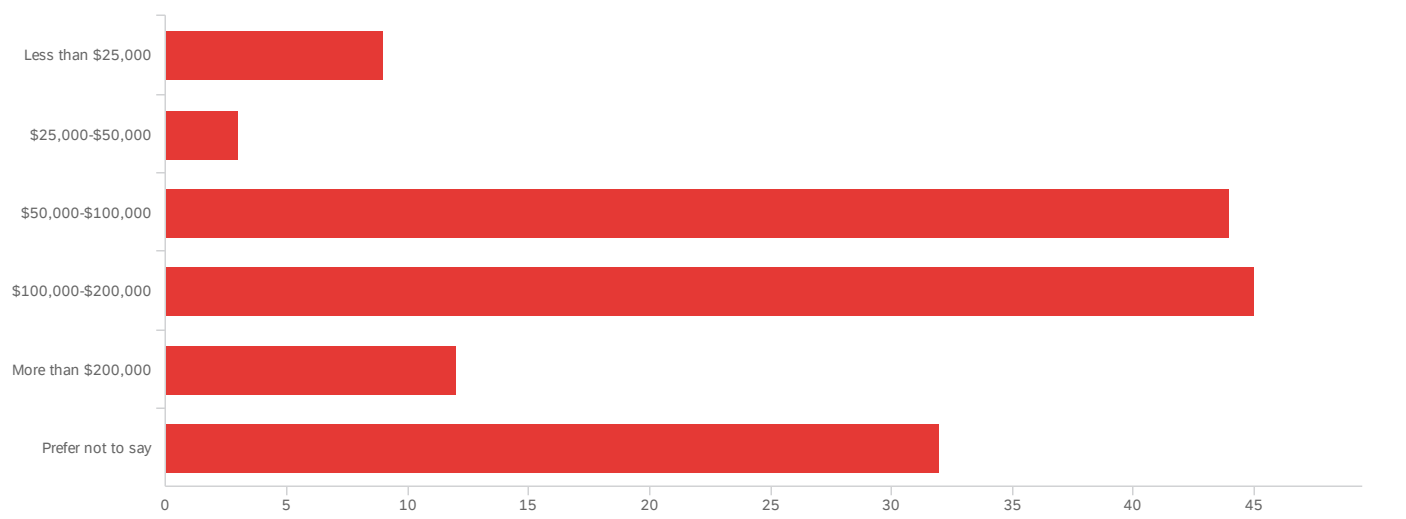


#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Do you have a disability?	1.00	3.00	1.87	0.50	0.25	147

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes	19.73% 29
2	No	73.47% 108
3	Prefer not to say	6.80% 10
		147

Showing rows 1 - 4 of 4

Q8-Demographics - What is your annual household income?



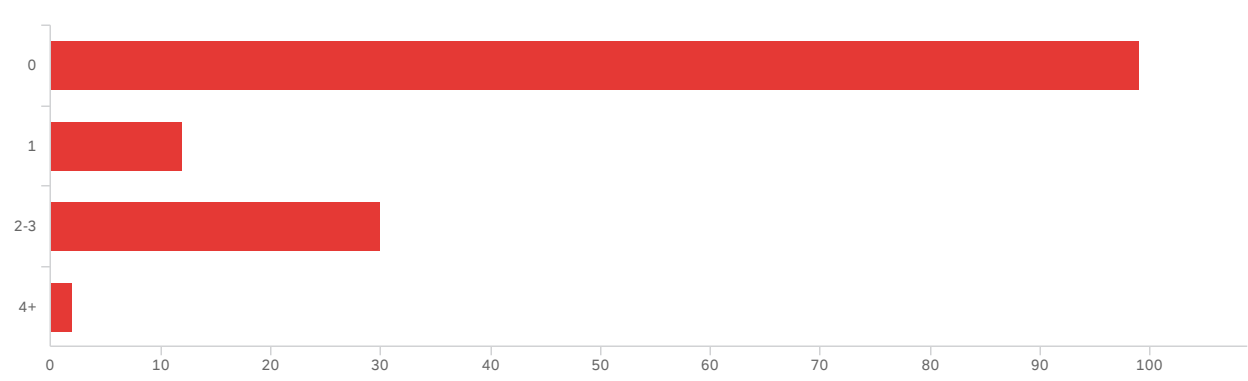
#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your annual household income?	1.00	6.00	3.99	1.38	1.91	145

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Less than \$25,000	6.21% 9
2	\$25,000-\$50,000	2.07% 3
3	\$50,000-\$100,000	30.34% 44
4	\$100,000-\$200,000	31.03% 45
5	More than \$200,000	8.28% 12
6	Prefer not to say	22.07% 32

145

Showing rows 1 - 7 of 7

Q9-Demographics - How many dependents do you have?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	How many dependents do you have?	1.00	4.00	1.55	0.87	0.75	143

#	Field	Choice Count
1	0	69.23% 99
2	1	8.39% 12
3	2-3	20.98% 30
4	4+	1.40% 2

143

Showing rows 1 - 5 of 5

Q10-Demographics - What is your primary language spoken at home?

What is your primary language spoken at home?
English
English
English
English
English
English
English
English
English
english
english
English
English
english
English
Anglais
English
English
english
English
English

What is your primary language spoken at home?

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English but speak two other languages

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

What is your primary language spoken at home?

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English but I speak Spanish as well.

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

english

English

What is your primary language spoken at home?

English

English

English

english

English

English

English

English

English

English

english

English

English

English

English

english

English

English

English

English

English

English

english

English

What is your primary language spoken at home?

English

English

English

English

english

English

english

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

english

English

English

English

What is your primary language spoken at home?

English

English

English

English

English

english

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

English

What is your primary language spoken at home?

English

english

English

End of Report